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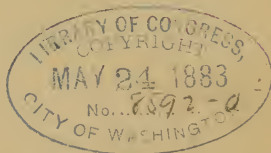
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LIFE AND CHARACTER
OF
PETER COOPER

BY
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OFFERING.

Many a time during my somewhat prolonged authorship, have I been called on to portray the lives of the great and good with whose acquaintance and friendship I had been honored. But never have I responded to such a request with so much alacrity and cheerfulness, as when I was asked to pay some literary Tribute to my beloved friend, the late PETER COOPER.

I knew him well for more than a quarter of a century, and my veneration and love for him grew with every year. And now, when some of the illusions of life have faded for me, and all of them for him, and I survey him robed in his fadeless garments beyond the tomb, I cannot withhold from him the unbidden homage: *Hail! Thou purest and noblest of men!*

He needs neither eulogy nor monument. Such things can do nothing for him now. They may for us. His name will outlive all earthly memorials built by other hands. But to help those who are to come after us, better to comprehend the greatness of the man, and the grandeur of the legacy he left to his countrymen, and

to all mankind for all time, it may be well to give some brief record of his life and character now, while the tender grass is springing for the first time over his grave, and he far away, in the Summer Land.

C. E. L.

NEW YORK, April 20, 1883.

LIFE AND CHARACTER OF PETER COOPER.

HOW I INTEND TO WRITE THIS SKETCH.

Next to an intimate personal knowledge of a man who rises above the common level, is such an account of his life and occupations, so truthfully written, as to enable the reader to form a just estimate of his character. This is all I attempt to do in this brief record.

The chief portion of my materials are drawn from notes and observations jotted down at intervals during my acquaintance with the man, with such citations from the statements of others worthy of implicit reliance.

My object is to write such a sketch as will make the reader feel, when he gets through, that he knows Peter Cooper almost as well as I did.

Here is the great charm of portraiture. That painter succeeds best who not only copies with fidelity the form and features of his sitter, but transfuses into the canvas the character, the intellect, and very soul of the man he delineates. This he must do with the integrity of the photograph, but he must do what the photographer never has done, and probably never can do—interpret the character of the sitter, which can be limned only by the cunning pencil of genius. It has, therefore, always seemed to me, that the most satisfactory biographies are those which are written very much as the best portraits

are painted by the artist who comprehends the character of his subject, who catches the characteristics flashed from the soul of his sitter and transfers them to the canvas.

Later biographies may be written with more philosophical analysis, or fascination; the style may be wrought into classical perfection, and the mind of the reader may be charmed by a gifted writer of genius who lives long after the subject of his biography has passed away. But to take a single instance. It is very doubtful if a careful reader of Boswell's Johnson ever gets so clear an idea of the great lexicographer's mind and characteristics from all his other biographies, as he gets from Boswell.

The only motive, therefore, which inspires me in this unpretending sketch, is to do with my subject what may prove to my reader the same kind of satisfaction he feels in looking at a well-executed portrait in oil, marble, or bronze.

PARENTAGE AND EARLY STRUGGLES.

I.

No man reaches great eminence without the favor of fortune. He did not make himself. And if he is richly gifted with the beneficence of kind Providence, or a genial destiny (by which I mean the same thing), he will find his road prepared for him on his way to success. He may often be confronted by obstacles which he cannot surmount, and many of his steps will be in the dark. He will encounter dangers that he could not foresee, enemies that would work his destruction, and deceivers lying in wait for him at many a turn. Sometimes

the elements make war on him, and sooner or later he will be struck down by a blow too strong for mortal to resist. But, in surveying his whole life after its close, and the victory has been won, he will see where all his pull-backs only the better prepared him for his journey, and that, like Antæus in the struggle, he grew stronger with every fall.

II.

In the highest sense of the term, he was fortunate in his parentage and ancestry. He sprang from the best stock that England and Scotland ever knew, transplanted to the new world long before young Cooper's birth. Indeed, of no orders that heraldry records among titles and honors conferred by royal hands, had he any knowledge among his forebears. They were rich only in what they won by honest toil, and from them he inherited the noblest qualities which exalt humanity.

His great-grandfather was the fourth male child born in Dutchess County. His grandfather was a soldier in the Revolution, holding the rank of Deputy Quartermaster General, and his own father served honorably in that Revolution, retiring at its close with the rank of Lieutenant, he resumed the prosecution of his trade as a hatter—a business he had before mastered.

John Campbell, the father of Peter Cooper's mother, was a well-to-do tile and pot-maker—his pottery standing near the site of St. Paul's Church on Broadway. He saw several years' service in the Board of Aldermen, when the best citizens alone were chosen for the legislative body of the City of New York.

We know of no higher nobility than for an American to reckon among his ancestors, the builders of the American Republic.

III.

While the ex-lieutenant Cooper was making and selling hats in a shop in Little Dock Street, a son was born to him, whom he named PETER, after the Great Apostle, with a full conviction that "the boy would come to something," and with the conscientious conviction that he had been instructed to do so by what he firmly believed to be a celestial vision. If it were but a superstition, the probability seems very strong that somebody was right.

In those days larger families grew up than we often witness now. Peter was the fifth of nine children, of whom seven were boys. He seemed not to inherit a strong constitution, and in his case, as in so many others, the fact that he reached so advanced an age could be attributed only to his living so natural a life; that he subjected himself to no influences or exposures which cut off the great mass of men in civilized countries from living out their natural lives. He owed his longevity chiefly to himself.

From his delicacy of constitution chiefly, he was never able to endure the confinement of school; in fact he never attended school more than one year, and then only a portion of the time for a part of the day. Owing to this cause more than to the poverty of his father, he was deprived of all school training. But this turned out in after years a blessing, although he could never so regard it, for one of the deepest influences that shaped his character and acts, was the high estimate he put upon knowledge, which he was not able to obtain in his boyhood, and to this fact we owe the existence of the Cooper Institute. He often said to his friends that he was determined, as far as in him lay, to

save as many young people as he could, from what he called his misfortune—the lack of early education. This is one of the instances in which some of the greatest gifts of fortune turn out to have been blessings in disguise; for who, in looking at this feeble stripling, who owed nothing to the schools, would have foreseen the birth of an inspiration for learning, which we are accustomed to attribute only to the benign impulses that spring from an early education? But he persisted to the last in regarding “the lack of schooling” as the great misfortune of his life. “If I could have had such advantages as we can give the poorest boy now, how much more could I have done!” These words often fell from his lips.

IV.

The time of a man's birth often has great influence upon his character and fortunes. Peter was born at an auspicious period, which was to inaugurate a new era for mankind. The Federal Constitution had been adopted in 1789. Washington had been elected President of the new Republic, and the first year of his administration was not yet completed. The French Revolution, which was supposed to have sounded the death-knell of monarchy in Europe, had opened a new order of things in the political world. The French Monarchy had been abolished, and its king's head was about to roll from the block of the guillotine. Beginning thus his life with the foundation of the Republic, their two lives were to glide on side by side during the first century of their existence—a century transcending in interest and importance to the human race, any other hundred years in the history of the world.

During this long period there were few closer ob-

servers of events, and fewer still who sympathized more deeply with the advancement of government and society, than Peter Cooper. With no proclivity to classical or philosophical learning, he was through life a diligent student of human affairs, and nothing that concerned the well-being of his fellow-men escaped his notice, from his nearest neighbors to the mightiest changes in the condition of nations. So that, while he could not be called a man of learning, he was preëminently a man of knowledge. He was an untiring student of nature and art; the mingling of those two made up his whole life; they culminated at last in the Institute which represents their blending.

v.

In the year 1791 nothing less than the ken of a prophet could have foreseen what New York was to be within a hundred years. The island of Manhattan contained less than thirty thousand people. City Hall Park was a vegetable garden, and the city then was limited on the north to Chambers Street; people dressed in homespun; there was no Fifth Avenue; the wealthy families lived around Bowling Green and the Battery; the period of opulence, enterprise, luxury and art was yet to come.

As soon as Peter was old enough to do any work, he and his six brothers were successively put into their father's hat shop to learn the trade and help the family to get on. For some years Peter followed his father, who removed from one place to another, often changing his business, but never meeting with great success. At last, in his seventeenth year, stirred with a higher ambition, the boy came to New York to start in life for himself. He had accumulated ten dollars of his own

money, and thinking to augment it rapidly, he invested his capital in a lottery ticket. He lost it, of course, as millions of older fools have since. But he never regretted it, and he often recalled the fact with good humor and thankfulness, for he said it was "the cheapest piece of knowledge he ever bought." Believing that his native city was the best place for doing business, and knowing that the only road to success was by steady hard work, he found, after long searching, a place in the carriage shop of Burtis & Woodward, on the corner of Broadway and Chambers Street, where a great marble structure was afterwards raised by A. T. Stewart, and there he bound himself out as an apprentice until he should reach the age of twenty-one. He was to receive his board and a salary of twenty-five dollars a year. Here he began life in earnest, and he attributed his after success in a great degree, to those four years of steady, hard work, with the economy which his little earnings enforced; and during the whole time he not only did not run in debt one cent, but he always had a little money laid by. With not only a tact but a genius for mechanism, he became so much a master of his trade, and had so won the confidence of his employers by his ability and devotion to their interests, that they offered to set him up in the same business in the Bowery. But he declined the offer; for one of his maxims, thus early established, was never to be in debt. Although he had made a number of improvements in the machinery for manufacturing carriages, particularly an apparatus for making hubs, the principle of which was embodied in later inventions, yet he was not satisfied with the business—"he thought he could do something better." The next two years he spent in a woollen factory at Hempstead, Long

Island. Here he received a dollar and a half a day, and invented an ingenious machine for shearing the nap from cloth. He wisely secured a patent for this invention, and it had a rapid sale at the time of the second war with England, when woollen goods were in great demand. Hearing that his father was in great affliction from the pressure of debt, he visited the family at Newburg, and applied the first five hundred dollars he had ever earned to their relief. But he went on successfully manufacturing his machine, until he was able not only to save his father from bankruptcy, but to secure comfort and competence for them in the future.

MARRIAGE.

I.

During his stay at Hempstead he had fallen in love with Miss Sarah Bedel, an engaging and superior girl, two years his junior, and they were married in 1813, when he was twenty-two years of age. If this marriage was not made in heaven, it brought heaven to the earth for Peter Cooper. In 1869 they celebrated the fifty-sixth anniversary of their wedding day. When she died, after a life of great usefulness, a happy mother and a perfect wife, she was honored and lamented as none but women of such rare virtue and beneficence ever are. Meeting Mr. Cooper after the funeral, when he seemed to me almost heart-broken, but with swimming eyes and a look of sublime resignation, he held my hand firmly in his grasp and said "Yes, she has gone, she who was the day-star, the solace and the inspiration of my life." Six children were born to them, four of whom died in childhood; but two

of them still survive—Edward Cooper, who received the highest honor his native city could confer on him, as Mayor; and Mrs. Sarah Amelia Hewitt, wife of Abraham S. Hewitt, who has distinguished himself as member of Congress, to which he has recently been re-elected, and as one of the largest iron and steel manufacturers of the country.

II.

While living at Hempstead, Mr. Cooper had bought a house and lot in the village, and removing to New York, he opened a grocery store at the Bowery and Rivington Street. After a year in this business, he bought the unexpired lease for nineteen years of the ground and frame buildings where the American Bible House now stands, fronting the massive pile of the Cooper Institute on the south. The situation was favorable for trade, and he soon began to acquire wealth. But his aspirations were by no means limited to the grocery business, and one day his old friend, John Vreeland,—the great hardware merchant of his time,—in passing Mr. Cooper's store, asked him why he did not buy out a glue factory standing on the corner where the Park Avenue Hotel was afterwards to be built. This factory was a large structure adapted to an extensive business, but it had not been successfully managed. Acting on that hint he purchased the property with a long lease, paying for it in cash down. This was his first great step to fortune, and from that day until his death, he was always regarded as a rich man.

III.

At first blush, this frequent change of business would seem to indicate instability of purpose. He was thirty-

three years old when he bought the glue factory, and had been in business for himself nine years, changing from carriage-maker to woollen-carder, and from woollen-carder to inventor, then becoming a cabinet-maker, only to continue the business one year, when he sold out to open a grocery store, continuing it only twelve months, and finally sold out this business to carry on a glue factory. Six changes in nine years have very seldom made anybody rich, but the proof of his wisdom was evident enough, for every movement was for the better. He had been steadily increasing his accumulations. This last change was to be permanent. He carried on the business in the same place for twenty-five years, when he built a large factory on cheaper ground, and he remained the best manufacturer of glue in the country until his death, when he left it to be carried on by his son. At that time all the glue manufactured in the United States was of an inferior quality; most of it in use came from Ireland, commanding three times as much as the home manufacture. Mr. Cooper mastered all the facts thoroughly, going through an extensive series of experiments, until he not only surpassed any glue made in the world, but he got the whole glue trade of the country into his hands. He went through the same experience with isinglass,—which had been chiefly supplied by Russia,—with surprising success in this new field. The Russian isinglass cost four dollars a pound; he manufactured a still better article for seventy-five cents. The demand for the article rapidly increased. Isinglass was used in refining liquors and making jellies. This manufactory had cost him only \$2000, but it subsequently proved the bulk of his fortune up to his great ventures in after life. He carried on the glue and isinglass business for many years al-

most alone. He had no bookkeeper, agent or salesman. Practising the extreme economy with which to the last he prosecuted all his business enterprises, he was found at his factory at break of day, lighting the fires, and preparing for the day's work. When noon-time came he drove down to the city and made his sales. With a promptness and perseverance throughout life which never in a business man can be praised too highly, he passed all his evenings at home, posting his books, attending to his correspondence, and talking and reading with his wife and children.

IV.

For thirty years this is the history of Peter Cooper. That history would however be grossly inaccurate and misleading, if some account should not be given of what really constituted his higher life. His great heart always went out beyond himself. Neglecting no possible duty, courtesy or tender attention to his family, he was forever doing good to the poor, the destitute, the ignorant, the unfortunate and the suffering. None but those whom he benefited or relieved, knew of his benefactions. He never alluded to them himself, and always enjoined his poor friends "to keep the thing to themselves;" he hated ostentation, and never blushed so deeply, as when some person praised him for a good deed he had done; it seemed to take away a part of the pleasure of doing it. Never did a man comply closer with the superb maxim of Jesus of Nazareth, "Let not thy right hand know what thy left hand doeth." Although multitudes of instances of his generosity have come to my knowledge, before and during the period of my intimate acquaintance with him, I shall not go into them at all; for so great is my respect

for his feelings, I would not willingly disregard them after his death, any more than I would have done during his life. There will be a field broad enough to illustrate his enthusiasm for doing good, when we come to speak of what constituted his great deeds for the benefit of his fellow-men.

INVENTION.

I.

Had Mr. Cooper done nothing else, his numerous and useful inventions would have claimed our special admiration. He engaged in no pursuit in which he did not by original invention, make certain improvements which greatly facilitated production, but to which he attached so little importance, that he allowed a large number of so-called improvements to be patented by other men, without claiming his legal rights. It was enough for him to know that somebody had done some good and he was the last man to interfere with him. His benevolence was so overflowing that no desire for acquisition ever ruffled the smooth surface of his goodwill. I recollect an instance in point: Happening to control a small interest in the great Cooper Iron Works at Trenton many years ago, meeting him one day he said, "I do not feel quite easy about the amount we are making in the production of one thing in our works at Trenton. Working under one of our patents, we have a monopoly which seems to me something wrong, that we alone are manufacturing, etc. Everybody has to come to us for it, and we are making money too fast: it is not right."

“Well,” I replied, “you can get over that trouble very easily by reducing the price, even if you are not obliged to.”

“That is it,” said he; “and it shall be done. The world needs this thing, and we are making them pay too high for it; if it were a mere matter of fancy, or luxury, or taste, I should feel differently about it; but as it is a very necessary article I must do something about it.”

II.

Among other things he had designed iron beams and girders to be used first of all in the Cooper Building. They at once went into use in the construction of large edifices, and have since been among the most important improvements in modern architecture. Another was iron railway seats, which went into universal use. Many years before this, however, he had displayed a higher order of mechanical genius, in the construction of the first locomotive made in this country designed for the transportation of passenger cars. He seemed to have a greater foresight of the work to be done by railways, than any man of his time. He had no intention of interesting himself very largely in the railroad enterprises of the time, nor did he afterwards make any considerable investment in them. It was the beginning of the railroad system in this country, which was bound to have so great an influence over the vast question of transportation. The construction of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad had begun with a subscription of only five dollars a share. It was supposed that would be sufficient. The work, however, absorbed more time and money than was expected, and at the end of twelve months more had been expended than the subscriptions

amounted to. Heavy grades and sharp turns had been found so numerous and difficult, it was believed they would prove impracticable for locomotives, and so large were the sums needed to complete the road, the shareholders were ready to abandon the enterprise, believing that further subscriptions would be only "throwing away good money after bad." Mr. Cooper differed entirely with his associates, and declared that he could himself build a locomotive that would demonstrate the practicability of using steam engines on that road, and he did so. It was on a small scale, but on trial it proved that he was right. In a very short time the locomotive was turned out of his factory, and pronounced a success. It was the first time, at least in this country, that a passenger car had been propelled by steam. That machine is still in existence, and many years later, when the hospitality of the city of Baltimore was proffered to him and accepted, it was one of the most enthusiastic and novel celebrations that had ever been witnessed; the first American locomotive being the chief object of curiosity and delight to the citizens of Baltimore, and the numerous distinguished guests who had been invited from other cities.

IRON AND STEEL WORKING.

I.

The time had now come when Mr. Cooper was to extend the field of his enterprises, and surpass all his contemporaries in the manufacture of iron and steel. He built extensive works in Thirty-third Street near Third Avenue, under his own supervision, and the finest works then in the country were completed and put into successful operation. In 1845 he associated with him

in the business, his son Edward and his son-in-law Hewitt, the former having under the tuition of the latter, attained as complete a scientific education as could then be acquired. This association became from that day a model for economy and completeness of work, being enlarged from time to time, until it reached its well-known magnitude and perfection. Their works were removed to Trenton, where a rolling-mill and wire factory was built. Soon afterwards, three large blast furnaces were erected in Phillipsburg, Penn., and the Ringwood property, including 11,000 acres of land, was purchased. To illustrate the important agency which Mr. Cooper had in the development of iron and steel manufacture in the United States, it is necessary to give some account of its advancement.

II.

Mr. Cooper's attention was early directed to the great resources of the United States for the manufacture of iron. As early as 1830, he had erected iron works at Canton, a suburb of Baltimore, and it was in the same year that he built, after his own designs, that first locomotive constructed on this continent. It was in New York city that he first successfully applied anthracite coal to the puddling of iron. In his works at Trenton, he was the first to roll wrought-iron beams for fire-proof buildings, and they were used in his Institute. The great firm he founded of Cooper, Hewitt & Co. finally comprised large mines of ore and coal, quarries, forges, blast furnaces, wire and rolling-mills, chain, horse-shoe and open-hearth steel works.

III.

The consumption of iron measures material civilization. To say, therefore, that the growth of the iron

business in the United States is a marvel is merely to say that during the last century the wilderness has been redeemed from barbarism, and that the lights of civilization have been spread over a continent with a rapidity never before known in the history of man. In the year 1867, in the report of Mr. Hewitt, the United States Commissioner to the Paris Exposition, he said: "The position of the coal measures of the United States suggests the idea of a gigantic bowl filled with treasure, the outer rim of which skirts along the Atlantic to the Gulf of Mexico, and thence returning by the plains which lie at the eastern base of the Rocky Mountains, passes by the great lakes to the place of beginning on the borders of Pennsylvania and New York. The rim of this basin is filled with exhaustless stores of iron ore of every variety, and of the best quality. In seeking the natural channels of water communication, whether on the north, east, south, or west, the coal must cut this metaliferous rim, and in its turn the iron ores may be carried back of the coal, to be used in conjunction with the carboniferous ores, which are quite as abundant in the United States as they are in England, but hitherto have been left unquarried in consequence of the cheaper rate of procuring the richer ores from the rim of the basin. Along the Atlantic slope, in the highland range from the borders of the Hudson River to the State of Georgia, a distance of one thousand miles, is found the great magnetic range traversing seven entire States in its length and course. Parallel with this, in the great limestone field which lies along the margin of the coal field, are the brown hematite, in such quantities in some points, especially in Virginia, Tennessee, and Alabama, as fairly to stagger the imagination; and finally, in the coal basin is a stratum of red

fossiliferous ore, beginning in a comparatively thin seam in the State of New York, and terminating in the State of Alabama, in a bed of fifteen feet in thickness, over which the horseman may ride a distance of more than one hundred miles. Finally, in this bed, but still above the water level, are to be found the coal seams exposed upon mountain sides whose flanks are covered with magnificent timber available either for railway purposes, or the manufacture of charcoal iron. Passing westward in Arkansas and Missouri, that wonderful range of red oxide of iron is reached, which, in mountains rising one hundred feet above the surface, or in beds beneath the soil, culminates at Lake Superior in deposits of ore which excite the wonder of the beholders; and returning thence to the Atlantic slope in the Adirondacks of New York, lies a vast undeveloped region, watered by rivers whose beds are of iron, and traversed by mountains whose foundations are laid upon the same material. Also in and among the coal beds themselves, are found scattered deposits of hematite and fossiliferous ores, which by their proximity to the coal, have inaugurated the iron industry of our day. Upon these vast treasures the world may draw its supply for centuries to come, and with this the inquirer may rest contented without further question, for all the coal from the rest of the world might be deposited within this entire rim, and its square miles would not occupy one quarter of the actual area of the United States. The region thus liberally endowed, has been peopled by a hardy, energetic, and unconquerable race. The very difficulties in the way of the iron industry have become incentives to exertion, and the causes of an unparalleled development.

“ At the beginning of the present century, the annual product of iron in the United States did not exceed 50,000

tons. In 1820 it was reduced to about 20,000 tons, but with the introduction of mineral fuel, it reached in 1830, 165,000 tons; in 1840, 315,000; in 1855, 784,000; in 1860, 920,000; in 1870, 1,865,000; and in 1875 the capacity of production exceeded 3,000,000 tons. The pro-rata increase since that time, has greatly exceeded any former period. While the average consumption of the world is about thirty pounds per capita of the population, the consumption in the United States has exceeded one hundred and fifty pounds. The future of the iron business in this country is not, therefore, a matter of conjecture. The necessities of the case will cause a continued development, until our magnificent resources of raw material are fully utilized."

ELECTRICITY AND OCEAN CABLES.

I.

Had Peter Cooper achieved nothing else in life, his fame would be perpetuated in connection with the science of electricity, especially by the laying of ocean cables. Electricians of the world will ever hold his name in veneration, for it is at least doubtful when the victory over formidable obstacles would have been won but for his decisive participation: it certainly would have been delayed for a long time. We cite the authority of the *Electrical Review*, which, in paying its tribute to Mr. Cooper, says: "It is not for us to dwell upon the spirit of philanthropy and catholicity of the man, to whom it gives the first honors among the Fathers of the Atlantic Cable. That great work was planned and accomplished by Peter Cooper. To him, more than to any

of his associates, is due the successful laying of the Atlantic Cable. Only electricians can fully comprehend the vexations, the obstacles, the mortifications that fall to the lot of those who would inaugurate so stupendous a project as that of connecting two continents, 3000 miles apart, by a simple strand. Confiding in the strength of his genius, and disregarding the claims of presuming ignorance, and opposing sound engineering views to the foolish projects so insolently thrust upon him by mediocrity, he conducted his long continued and arduous labors with rare success, intelligence and fortitude. No mishap disturbed, no misrepresentation deceived him: no remonstrance shook his determination. Fortune frowned without subduing his constancy. Mortification followed mortification, but the spirit of the man was unbroken. At last he succeeded—thoroughly, phenomenally. Two worlds, which before his efforts had been two weeks apart, were brought so close together that a few moments sufficed to put them in communication, the one with the other. Through this accomplishment of Peter Cooper, formerly retarded, humanity has been greatly benefited, and vast sums of money have been saved by the early information guaranteed by electricity.

“The story of the completion and development of the scheme for laying an Atlantic cable, is especially interesting to electricians. Associated with Cyrus Field, Moses Taylor, Marshall O. Roberts, Wilson G. Hunt, Peter Cooper built a line of telegraph across Newfoundland, as a preliminary to connecting the United States with the British Isles. Difficulty after difficulty was surmounted, and ten years elapsed, during which time large sums were expended, before a penny found its way back into the pockets of the promoters of the

scheme. The first cable laid was almost immediately lost in the Gulf of St. Lawrence, and with it \$300,000, through the obstinacy and ignorance of the master of the ship employed to tow the cable boat. Two years later, another cable had been manufactured, and this was laid with but little difficulty, across the Gulf of St. Lawrence.

“And now for the great ocean cable. After getting a few trifling subscriptions in the United States, Mr. Cooper succeeded in having Mr. Field sent to Europe to raise the required sum. His mission was successful, and a contract was made for the manufacture of the great cable. This was placed upon two ships which were to meet in mid-ocean. They did meet; the two ends of the cable were joined and laid down successfully. At the Newfoundland end four hundred messages were received from Europe, when the current became weaker and weaker, and finally ceased to make any mechanical movement. On this side, people were sceptical; few believed that any message had been sent at all; they looked upon the whole thing as a gigantic humbug.”

II.

“It so happened,” said Mr. Cooper, in recently relating his experience at the time, “that the few messages that we received over the cable, were important to the British Government, for it had arranged to transport a large number of soldiers from Canada to China to take part in the war against the Chinese, and just before the transports were to sail, a telegram came across our cable, to the effect that the war had ceased, and peace had been declared. This inspired the English people with confidence in our project. But, as I said, the

whole thing was here believed to be a humbug. At a meeting in the Chamber of Commerce, a member arose and openly declared that, in his belief, no messages had been sent at all. Mr. Cunard, however, arose and said that 'the gentleman did not know what he was talking about, and had no right to say what he had; that he (Mr. Cunard) had sent messages himself and got answers thereto.' Mr. Cunard was a positive witness; he had been on the spot, and the objector must have felt 'slim' at the result of his attempt to cast ridicule on men whose efforts, if unsuccessful, were at least worthy of praise.

"We succeeded in getting another cable, but when we had got it about half-way over, we lost that as well. Then the project seemed hopeless. We thought for a long time, that our money was all lost. The matter rested for two years before anything was done. Finally we sent Mr. Field to England again to raise money. At first they laughed at him. They said that they thought that the thing was dead enough, and buried dead enough in the ocean, to satisfy every one. But Field finally got hold of an old Quaker friend, whom he so electrified, that he put up four hundred thousand dollars, and fourteen days later he had succeeded in getting the whole amount necessary—four millions of dollars.

"The cable was made and put down, and it worked successfully. Then we went out to see if we could not pick up the other one. The balance of the lost cable was aboard the ship. The cable was found, picked up, and joined to the rest; and this wonder of the world was accomplished. The cable was taken out of the ocean where it was two and a half miles deep.

"In taking up the first cable," Mr. Cooper continued, "the cause of the failure was discovered. In passing

it into the vat manufactured for it where it was intended to lie under water, the workmen neglected to keep it immersed, and on one occasion when the sun shone very hot down into the vat, its rays melted the gutta-percha, so that the copper wire inside sunk down against the outer covering."

After the two ocean cables had been laid successfully, it was found necessary to have a second cable laid across the Gulf of St. Lawrence. The delays had been so frequent, that now only Mr. Cooper, Mr. Field and Mr. Roberts, took any interest in the matter. Bonds were offered at fifty cents on the dollar, and these three men were compelled to take them up themselves. The Bank of Newfoundland, through which the business of the company was transacted, refused to trust it, and drew upon Mr. Cooper personally, and he was compelled to pay the drafts out of his own pocket. When the cable proved a success, however, the stock rose to \$90 a share, at which figure it was sold out to an English company. This not only proved the means of saving Mr. Cooper from great loss, but added largely to his fortune.

III.

The careful reader of history is often arrested by events which mark the turning points in the destinies of men and nations. This is as true in the record of great inventions and discoveries, as in the destinies of nations. In the crisis of the Atlantic Cable, if Peter Cooper had hesitated for an hour, God only knows when the next cable would have been laid. So, too, we may say, had the courage of Columbus given way at the last moment, who could tell the fate of this continent? The devout reverently call these *special providences*, and a philoso-

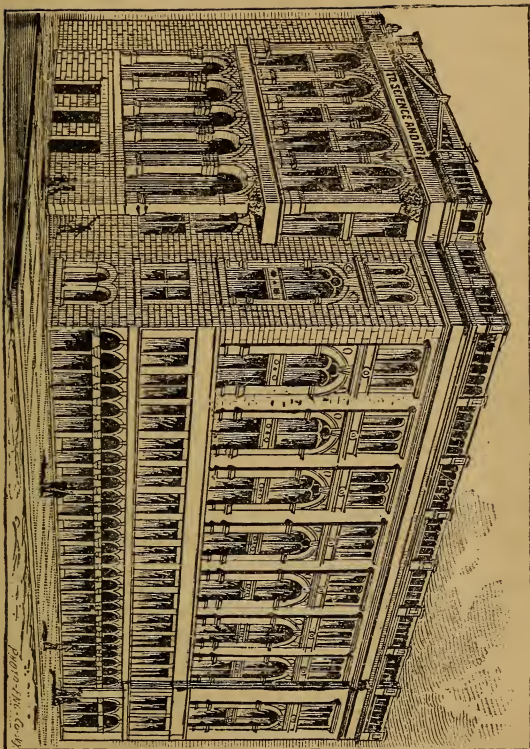
pher, like Sir Isaac Newton, asks the sceptical, "If they be not special providences, what are they?" Unbelieving souls never accomplish anything. Without the inspiration of heroism, and faith in the Supreme Power that controls the universe, nothing great was ever done by the human race. If there ever was a genuine atheist, he was a very small man. The earnest believer in the God of Christianity, finds a deep significance in the fact that, in the darkest hours of our Revolutionary struggle, the half-suppressed murmur of prayer was sometimes heard from the tent of the commander-in-chief. During that great drama of life and death, when every earnest heart in the nation was engaged in the same business, there were times when the soul of man could find help nowhere but in going to the Omnipotent and loving Father. This is what true men understand by being "made in the image of God." This is what every true Christian understands by prayer. Woe be to the man who is ignorant of all this! So far is he unworthy of being trusted with the affairs of a great people, the poor wretch's soul is not safe in his own keeping. The torch-bearers of human hope, the salvators of humanity, the great men who in all the ages have led the human race on to light and victory, have been reverent men. It was by the greatest heroes of Greece that Jupiter's Heaven was oftenest besieged by supplication. The Hebrew Law-giver—the greatest man of antiquity—talked familiarly with God. Socrates—the intellectual educator of the ages—believed in heavenly inspiration, and the divine guidance of his guardian angel. The old Idumean Prince, in the sublime allegory of Job, was but a type of what every great soul must pass through before it can be crowned with victory and redemption. He was the most reverent and illuminated

interpreter of the Almighty of whom history has left any record. Worship of God, and prayer, and sacrifice, was the inspiration of the invincible Roman legions. Dependence upon the Supreme Power, speaks from every altar ever erected by human hands. Constantine was invincible only after he saw the cross flaming in the sky. It was for the recovery of the tomb of the Saviour, and in the name of the Christian's God, that the armies of Saladin went down before the chivalry of Europe. Prayer was as much the order of the day as drill, in the army of Cromwell. Everywhere we find that the men who pray best, are the hardest fighters. The battle cry of the "sword of the Lord and of Gideon" sent terror through the Assyrian host. It has been too common to sneer at the Puritans, but says Macaulay, "No man ever did it who had occasion to meet them in the halls of debate, or cross swords with them on the field of battle." If there ever was a man of this type; if there ever was a man who carried a lion-hearted courage, and believing soul in his bosom; if there ever was a man who never quailed, nor ever could quail, in the presence of earthly or infernal powers, that man was Peter Cooper.

THE COOPER INSTITUTE.

I.

The founding of the "Cooper Union of Art and Science," was the great achievement of Cooper's life. It was entirely his own creation. No other person has ever claimed the credit of it, or if such claim were made, it would never be allowed. The conception of it was original in the mind of the founder. The design of the edifice in all its parts and proportions, and the very



COOPER INSTITUTE.

curriculum of its studies, the primal and ultimate objects to be accomplished, and its administration up to the time of his death, were all the work of its founder. It was his life work. In comparison with it, he regarded all his other labors as insignificant; and by it he will be forever known. To it he gave the labors, the savings, the solitudes and the enthusiasm of his great soul, for a longer period than the vast majority of the human race live. During this time, hardly an hour of conscious life passed by, or a night of dreams, in which his great object did not claim the highest place. No other thing inflamed or sustained his lofty ambition. Among his parting words, as he was calmly contemplating the endless future, through whose gates "on golden hinges turning" to admit him, amidst tender words to his children who stood round his bedside, were whispered utterances, almost with his last breath, about the Cooper Union. Such a solace in that parting hour, was the most fitting for his sublime soul as it plumed itself for its celestial flight.

"The chamber where the good man meets his fate
Is privileged above the common walk;
Quite on the verge of heaven."

To him above all other men known to our times, may most properly be applied the fine words of his life-long friend, William Cullen Bryant:

"So live that when thy summons comes to join
The innumerable caravan that moves,
To that mysterious realm where each shall take
His chamber in the silent halls of death,
Thou go not, like the quarry-slave at night,
Scourged to his dungeon, but, sustained and soothed
By an unfaltering trust, approach thy grave,
Like one who wraps the drapery of his couch
About him, and lies down to pleasant dreams."

THE BUILDER'S PURPOSE.

I.

At no time had Mr. Cooper cherished an ambition for political distinction or public honor, and it was entirely against his wishes to hold any public office. But he was importuned by his fellow-citizens to accept a nomination for the Board of Assistant Aldermen for the Eighth Ward, stretching from Eighth Street to the Harlem River. A delegation of the most substantial citizens in that district, tendered him the nomination, and the desire was very earnest to have him accept it. He firmly refused, but told them that he would contribute \$5000 to the election of any good man they should fix upon. But this did not defeat their purpose. He was elected with very little opposition, and in taking his seat, which he did reluctantly, he said that "perhaps it might give him an opportunity to render some little service to his fellow-citizens," and it did. He immediately devoted himself to the work before him, and secured several reforms in the city government.

II.

He advocated, among other measures, the proposition to make the fire and police departments paid bodies; that the insurance companies and the city, should contribute a percentage of all that the damage by fire and loss by thieves was reduced below the average, which should be distributed among the members of the departments annually, to encourage them in their duty. In consequence of a petition to the Legislature, started by Mr. Cooper, the police was reorganized. He proposed a plan for extinguishing fires, which was to have elevated

water-tanks with force-pumps, hose-carriages to be kept on every block, something after the present Holly system. We owe to him the cupola of the City Hall, which was built in place of the former box-like structure. He was a committee of one to superintend the erection of the new town clock. He interested himself in the improvement of the sanitary condition of the city, and, far ahead of his times, he directed public attention to that great reform.

III.

But he had from 1839 been a most active member of the Public School Society, till it was superseded by the Board of Education, of which he was elected president, which position he found perfectly congenial to his tastes and feelings. Here he first entered upon what he called "the hobby of his life;" saying to some of the principal citizens that "he hoped he should live to see the day that better provision would be made for free instruction, especially for those boys and girls who were unprovided with the means of education;" recalling his own experience, as a perpetual inspiration. He had had to do nearly all the work in the Public School Society. Others were too much occupied with their own affairs, or less enthusiastic than himself. He held the laboring oar with a strong arm, and it was a good apprenticeship to prepare himself for that kind of work for which nature and fortune seemed to have designed him. While he was serving as assistant alderman in 1828, he had fully determined to make arrangements for the construction of the great institution which bears his name, and he lost no opportunity to gather information from the best sources relative to such a work.

IV

The only institution he could learn of in the world that carried out in any considerable degree the objects he wished to attain, was the Polytechnic School of Paris. It had received the special attention of a well-informed American gentleman just returned from France, who described to Mr. Cooper all he had seen and learned of that institution. He represented that the pupils who were admitted had, many of them, been obliged to go through great hardships to get the benefit which the lectures and instruction afforded. Mr. Cooper conversed with professors and teachers of higher schools, and having at last settled upon the kind of a school that was most needed for those having no other source of advancement, and having laid up, with a view to such an ultimate result, money enough to start on, he proceeded to buy the ground for the building, keeping his purpose pretty much to himself. He secured the site just about where the Bowery branches into Third and Fourth Avenues, and began to prepare the ground for the building. He was his own architect. Being a master mechanic in several trades, and having erected large edifices, he justly felt himself competent to do that work, commanding such assistance all through, as he needed, and subjecting his plans to the severest criticism on all occasions. He was determined to put up a building as nearly fire-proof as could be made, since it was to be of stone, brick, and iron. The corner-stone of the Union was laid. Within that stone was placed a scroll which bore this inscription: "The great object that I desire to accomplish by the erection of this institution, is to open the avenues of scientific knowledge to the youth of our city and country, and so unfold the volume of Nature, that the young may see the beauties of creation,

enjoy its blessings, and learn to love the Author from whom cometh every good and perfect gift."

V.

The school was "to be forever devoted to the Union of Science and Art in its application to the useful purposes of life." The work went steadily on under his direct supervision for five years; and from the foundation, deeply and securely laid, rose a brown-stone and iron structure of massive Roman architecture, an irregular quadrangle in shape, its dimensions on its four sides being 90, 146, 165, and 195 feet, rising four lofty stories above the great basement hall, which has ever since been the largest and most popular lecture-room in the city. From that hall more light and knowledge have been diffused, than from any other single room in the United States, or perhaps in the whole world. The original plan embraced a sixth story, which was to be added in subsequent years, as the demand for increased facilities for education multiplied. When it was completed, the structure had cost, together with the expense of the ground, nearly seven hundred thousand dollars. This was in the cheap days of New York, and every dollar of that money had been earned by Mr. Cooper. Further expenditures, which have been steadily increasing, with his own endowments, made the entire outlay at the time of his death considerably more than one million dollars. Large areas were devoted to rent for business purposes, so that from all sources the income for several years has exceeded \$50,000 per annum. It therefore rests upon a permanent foundation: all the work of one man, without the contribution of a dollar from any other source. Thus far for the history of the construction of the edifice and its endowments.

THE INTELLECTUAL STRUCTURE.

I.

The significance of this colossal pile, like that of any other great building, depends chiefly upon the object to which it is devoted. The spires or towers of a great church or cathedral, proclaim the purpose for which they were built. They all speak the same language of the adoration of man for the Great Creator, and the preservation of Religion on the earth. But in the case of the Cooper Institute, it is necessary to look at its internal arrangement, to comprehend the mind of the founder, which in scientific and artistic adaptation far exceeds the grandeur of the architecture. A few weeks before his death, the writer said, in speaking of the founder of the institution: The old saying that it is dangerous to praise the living, will not apply to Peter Cooper, for his record has been so long and so indelibly cut into history, that it has passed beyond even his own power to efface it. His good deeds have been too many to be impaired by disparagement, or to fade from the memory of men. The conviction of illuminated *savans*, and experienced teachers at home and abroad, agree that he founded the best institution for the promotion of Science and Art which exists to-day on the earth. It exceeds all others in the breadth of its plan, and the universality of its benevolence. Every brick and stone, from corner to its highest copings, every one of its departments and appliances, with the adjustment of its parts, all speak the same language. Like a Greek temple erected to the adoration of the immortal gods, it proclaims, to every one who crosses its vestibule, for what purpose it was erected. No an-

cient architect was born poorer than Peter Cooper, and no one of them achieved fame without patronage. Cooper had no help from anybody but God: and well it was so, for no other being could help him. He had a grand work to do, and he lived to perfect it.

And now in his ninety-second year, his eye is still clear, and his natural force seems unabated; reaping the most abundant reward that can ever fall to mortal, in the love and respect of civilized nations, and the heartfelt gratitude of the myriads whom he has lifted from ignorance and helplessness, to learning and independence. And his beneficence will stretch away into the far future. Neither prayer nor praise are now needed, nor will they ever be, for him!

II.

In the Report of 1879 of the United States Commissioner of Education, we find the following statement:

*"The Cooper Union Free Night Schools of Science.—*These afford a remarkable example of the intelligent application of a great charity. Their purpose is the technical instruction of the laboring classes, which is accomplished through the agency of a free library and reading-room, free lectures, and two classes of schools, viz., the Evening Schools of Science and Art, and the Art School for Women. The course of study in the former, embraces the ordinary English branches, with advanced courses in mathematics, mechanics, physics, literature, and rhetoric. The art department of the evening schools, embraces instruction in all branches of drawing, viz., free hand, architectural, mechanical, and drawing from cast; also industrial drawing, and design and modelling in clay. Women are admitted to the scientific classes, but not to the art classes, a special

school of Art being maintained for them. The latter is divided into five departments—drawing, painting, photography, wood-engraving, and normal teaching.

“In both of the Art schools the training is constantly directed to the preparation of the pupils for those employments in which the arts of design and drawing are the principal or accessory occupations; 2820 pupils were registered the present year in the Evening Schools of Science and Art, of whom 2707 were engaged during the day in various trades and occupations. Owing to the exigencies of their industrial life, but few of the pupils can remain long enough in the institution to complete the whole course and receive the diploma and medal of the Cooper Union. Certificates of proficiency are awarded to those who pass satisfactory examination on the work of a particular class; 634 such certificates were awarded in 1879.

“The number of pupils admitted to the free morning classes of the Woman’s Art School, was 255, and to the engraving class for women, 37. In the art school the earnings for the year were \$9,525.75, and in the engraving class, \$1,820.59. All money earned in the schools belongs to the pupils, and a number are thus enabled to support themselves while studying.

“The subsequent career of the graduates is followed with constant interest, and the facts thus brought to light, afford the most gratifying evidence of the practical results of the instruction. A large proportion of the graduates command lucrative positions as teachers of art, photo-colorers, decorators, and designers.

“The school of telegraphy for women admitted 35 pupils the present year. The Western Union Telegraph Company has so far interested itself in the school, as to nominate a teacher who trains the pupils in the

thorough methods of that company. Although under no agreement to provide places for the scholars, the Company has employed a large proportion of the graduates on its lines.

“Instruction in all the schools and classes above described, together with all privileges of the institution, is absolutely free. In consequence of the great pressure for admission, and the earnest offer of many to pay for their instruction, the trustees have allowed an amateur class to be formed, which meets in the afternoon out of the regular class hours, and the members of which pay a small fee. Half of the money thus realized goes to the teacher, and the other half to the free schools. The fees for the present year amount to \$2326.”

Higher praise could hardly be offered; and yet the Commissioner accords to the Cooper Institute the honor of placing it between the Stevens Institute of Technology, of Hoboken, and the Franklin Institute, of Philadelphia!

III.

In the Twenty-third Annual Report of the Trustees of the Cooper Union—May 27, 1882—we find the following statement:

“Comparing the Art School of 1871-2 with its condition in 1881, I find in summing up the numbers the total of

Applicants for the school in 1871-72	was	173
“ “ “ “ 1881-82	“	1,397
The number of admissions in 1871-72	was	173
“ “ “ “ 1881-82	“	711
The number of classes in 1871-72	was	3
“ “ “ “ 1881-82	was	14

“The amount of all money that could be heard of all former pupils earning in 1871-72, was \$4000. The amount of money earned by present pupils, and by graduates of 1880-81 only, is, so far as reported, \$29,003.57. The last figures do not represent the entire amount, as I know that many of last year's graduates are earning money who have given me no report at all.

“The total number of pupils in the school who are earning, is 113, of whom 51 are in the photograph classes, and 27 in the engraving class. All the money earned belongs to the pupils themselves.

“Last year's report, *i.e.*, the annual report of 1880-81, shows that \$19,480.25 was earned, making an increase in this year's report of \$9452.32. This is very encouraging, as this season there has been a larger number than usual of new scholars in the Art School.

“This growth of the school is gratifying; yet, at the same time, one cannot but reflect that 686 persons, or nearly as many as were able to be admitted, were disappointed in their efforts to gain admittance. Were the Art rooms as large again, the income of the Cooper Union double, and the general appliances of casts, books, etc., double, we could use them all.”

IV.

And yet these statistics give but a faint idea of what the Cooper Union really is. It can be better learned from a more minute description by a careful writer in *The New York Herald*, who embraced a more complete conception of the plan Mr. Cooper carried out. He says: “A quarter of a century ago, lacking one year, Peter Cooper realized the dream of his life in the establishment of the institution which bears his name. Believing, as few, very few, rich men do, that his wealth

was a sacred trust to be used for the benefit of his fellow-creatures, Mr. Cooper gave not merely of his money, but his life thenceforth, and anxious thought to the building up and maintenance of the Cooper Union for the Advancement of Science and Art. The title, while it expresses a high purpose, falls far short of conveying any idea of the vast range of the good work of the Union. The advancement of science and art is well enough; but to teach, without one cent of charge, 40,000 men and women to earn a good living at skilled trades; to cultivate, without money and without price, the hands and brains of scores of thousands so that they may advance themselves in the world, and to exalt, mentally, morally and physically, the poor and friendless, are far nobler objects. What the schools of the Cooper Union do is to give boys and girls that practical education which will be inestimably valuable to them in their trades and professions, and enable them to earn bread and butter, and something besides, for their families."

V.

Schools in the Different Departments.—"The schools occupy the greater part of the building. The whole of the large structure above the reading-room, which is on the second floor, is divided into class-rooms and devoted to educational purposes of a wide range. There are now thirty-five hundred pupils, and there would be many more if the building would accommodate them. The demand is growing every year, and in all the departments the applicants seeking admission far exceed the accommodations. In some classes the number of those who were turned away at the beginning of the present year, was greater than the number admitted. The pupils are received on the simple rule of first come

first served, the necessary qualifications on the part of the applicant being good character, a suitable age, and an expressed intention to turn the advantages of the institution to industrial purposes and self-support. Great care is taken to select for admission those who are the least able to pay the usual charges of educational institutions for special instruction. Young men and girls with poor parents, or who are dependent upon their own resources, are always given the first choice. Amateurs in art or science are not wanted and not admitted, with a single unimportant exception, to be hereafter explained. Such is the reputation for thoroughness in the instruction given in these schools, that many parents who can and will pay liberally are anxious to have their children received. The building could be filled with these amateurs twice over every season, but it would be directly contrary to the wise purposes of the founder to receive this class, and they are never knowingly taken. The private pay schools furnish ample provision for them.

“ ‘It is a great pity we have not more room,’ said Curator Zachos; ‘this great institution should be multiplied fourfold. In some of the branches—notably the women’s art school—applicants for admission sometimes wait for two years before they can be received. We use every available inch of room.’ ”

VI.

The writer continues: “The actual work of the Cooper Union is one of the largest of any educational institution in the world. The reading-room furnishes amusement and instruction to over two thousand people every day, and over three hundred papers and magazines and five hundred books are called for. It is open

from eight in the morning until ten at night through the week, and on Sundays after twelve o'clock, and every respectable person is admitted without any formality or restriction. It is the largest reading-room in the country, is well lighted and comfortable, and fully supplied with the periodical literature of many languages.

“But the reading-room is the least important part of the educational machinery of Cooper Union. The number of pupils who entered the various classes last year was 3334. And besides these there are public lectures every Saturday night during the fall and winter in the great hall of the Union, where about two thousand people assemble once every week, to hear the most distinguished men in the country discourse upon the questions of the day in science, art, and literature.”

VII.

For Boys and Men.—“There are both day and night schools. The former are for girls and young ladies, the latter for boys and young men. The male schools are in two sections—the department of science, and the department of art. The first admits about one thousand scholars during the term, and has classes in algebra, geometry, trigonometry, analytical and descriptive geometry, differential and integral calculus, elementary mechanics, natural philosophy, engineering, astronomy, elementary and analytical chemistry, geology, scientific mechanical drawing, oratory and debate.

“The art school admits over 1200 pupils during the term, and teaches them drawing in perspective, mechanical and architectural drawing, drawing from the cast, form drawing, industrial drawing, free-hand drawing and modelling in clay. The students join whatever classes they please, choosing those, of course, which

will best fit them for the calling which they expect to follow. Some of them cannot afford the time necessary for the complete course, and the personnel of the classes changes considerably before the school year is over. Nearly all the pupils work at their trades during the day—and attend the schools at night. The hours are from half-past seven to half-past nine, and every class-room is occupied every evening. The students must be over fifteen years of age and have a good rudimentary education in reading, writing and arithmetic. The majority are lads of from eighteen to twenty, serving their time in workshop or office, but it is a common sight to see a middle-aged man standing by the side of a boy of seventeen.”

VIII.

The Scientific Classes.—“Most of those in the scientific classes are embryo machinists, designers, artistic woodworkers, stone cutters, jewellers, painters, and workers in metals. As nearly all of them are obliged to work at their trades during the day, the pupils find a nightly attendance at school, too confining, and that is one reason why the classes are not identically the same at the close of the term as at the beginning. The lads are generally bright, ambitious and industrious, and, beginning with the school year in October, they want to study everything. They join all the classes and come every night, but after a few months they find they have undertaken too much, and allow some of the studies to drop, devoting themselves to others and averaging about four nights a week at school. Stationery, materials required in the chemical and modelling classes, etc., are furnished free, and text-books are sold at cost price. The classes in oratory and debate are the largest, and

next come algebra, geometry, and elementary chemistry. It is considered by Professor Plympton, the director of the night schools and professor of philosophy, mechanism and astronomy, that a full course of mathematics is a necessary preliminary to any thorough scientific study. Very few have come to the schools prepared with elementary mathematics for the study of practical engineering and mechanics. 'It is to be regretted,' says Professor Plympton, 'that very few students can remain to pursue the whole course of scientific studies which entitles them to the medal and diploma. But nothing less than such a course can enable a man to achieve the highest sphere of usefulness in the ranks of modern industry. Certificates of proficiency are, however, given to those who have attended the class on any particular subject and passed a satisfactory examination.' The lectures on natural philosophy, chemistry, English literature, elocution and rhetoric are attended by many who do not belong to the classes."

X.

The Art Schools for Men.—"The male classes in the art schools are for the most part made up of apprentices in architects' offices, and of designers of tiles, wall papers, oilcloths, carriage painters and makers, mechanical sculptors, and of kindred trades where artistic workmanship is called for. There is no other school in New York where facilities of this sort are furnished free. The Society of Mechanics and Tradesmen gives free lectures to artisans on certain branches occasionally, but they do not pretend to the scope and thoroughness of the Cooper Union courses. The largest classes in the art department are in free-hand drawing, and in mechanical, architectural and industrial drawing. All

the lessons are practical, and bearing on the employments in which the arts of design and drawing are principal or accessory occupations. But if the pupil shows a talent for high art, and has the leisure and means to pursue it, he is recommended to other schools in this city established for the special instruction of professional artists."

XI.

The Women's School.—"To provide honorable and useful employment for women, is one of the problems of civilization. The necessity for self-support is as imperative to many women as to men, and skilled employments of some kinds are better adapted for women than for men. Nothing seems to supply this want so well as the industrial art schools of Cooper Union.

"The art school for women is open every day from nine to one. Mrs. Susan H. Carter is the principal. There are about eight hundred pupils, and every room is crowded. The course of instruction includes all that is taught in the male art schools, and much more. Many of the graduates find places as teachers of drawing, painting, and so on, and others become designers for carpets, oilcloths, wall papers, tiles, etc. Mr. R. Swain Gifford is the instructor in painting to graduates from the drawing classes.

"The school is divided into five departments—drawing, painting, photography, wood engraving, and normal teaching. The drawing and painting school is conducted on a high plane of skill and taste, and has furnished many teachers in these departments. It is the purpose of the instruction in the art departments, to unite the two instrumentalities in the productions of art—both designing and careful execution. Invention is

specially promoted by the lectures on art which the pupils receive, the instruction in perspective drawing, and especially the lectures and instruction given to the normal class for the preparation of teachers of drawing in private and public schools. It is the purpose of the trustees to extend the instruction in the schools of art more into the departments of invention and design, as answering a demand most truly American, where the inventive faculties are more active than in any part of the world."

XII.

The Pupils' Earnings.—"It is worthy of note that the purpose of giving such instruction in practical art and applied sciences as will put an independent employment in the hands of every student, is in many instances commenced while the pupil is still under instruction in the institution. This is especially the case in the art school for women. The amount reported as earned for themselves by pupils in the different departments of the women's art school last year, was \$28,932.

"There is an afternoon pay class for amateurs. For the establishment of this class there was a great demand. It meets in the afternoon, and does not trench upon the hours of the free classes. Said Mrs. Carter in her last report:

" ' Besides paying Mr. Gifford's salary from the proceeds of the afternoon class, I have been able to hire models constantly for the free-hand morning class, thus pushing the drawing of the school as far as portraiture, which has added thirty women more to the school. This class has been taught by Mr. Wyatt Eaton, Mr. J. Alden Weir, and Mr. Douglas Volk, and has raised the artistic reputation of the school till it is considered among the

best in the country. The necessity for a china-painting class, soon began to be felt, and for a small fee, much less than would suffice in any studio where the expense of rent, etc., must be defrayed, more than ninety women have annually learned this profitable and interesting branch.

“ ‘The practical results for the pupils of the art school ten years ago were comparatively insignificant. Some ladies went into art employments, and in the engraving class its pupils and all former graduates earned \$2285. This year the pupils now working in that class report \$4122, and our total report of money earned in the school by present pupils and last season’s graduates, is \$29,033.57, against a total of \$4000 in 1872.’ ”

XIII.

Engraving, Telegraphy, and Typewriting.—“ There are some forty ladies in the engraving class. The advanced pupils do clever work, and are employed on the *Century* magazine and other publications.

“ There are sixty or more young ladies who study telegraphing. The Western Union Telegraph Company has so far interested itself in this school, as to pay a teacher who trains the pupils in the thorough methods of that Company. It can thus draw competent operators for its offices from this school, and it has provided a large proportion of the graduates of this school, in times past, with employment on its lines, although it is under no special obligation to provide a place for any.

“ The last thing Mr. Cooper did before he died was to purchase ten typewriters. Instruction in their use has been added to the women’s schools, and it has been found a very useful adjunct. Work can easily be procured for girls who understand this process of copying.”

XIV.

General Work of the Institution.—"The last report of the curator says, concerning the general work of the institution:

"Within a few years, and largely due to the influence of the Cooper Union, technical schools and systematic instruction in skilled forms of labor, have been established in several large cities. The diffusion of wealth and intelligence among those called the operative classes, as distinguished from the professional, renders their demand upon the public wealth for educational facilities, more and more imperative; and nothing can satisfy this demand short of engrafting upon the common-school system the methods of the industrial and technical school. The Cooper Union and smaller institutions of a similar kind, are leading the way and inaugurating the methods, for a great system of instruction specially adapted to the wants of the industrial and skilled operative classes that form much the largest part of the population of those countries.

"The pupils who leave the schools with some proof of proficiency demonstrate the help which such instruction is to them, by the readiness with which they get employment. There is often a call, in advance, upon the principals of the scientific and art departments, for men or women thought competent to teach, or to conduct the different employments which they are taught here."

XV.

The Summing Up.—"In summing up this brief view of the Cooper Union, the thoughtful mind will reflect on the fact that, with a sum of money less than the an-

nual expenditure of many a wealthy family in this city, the Cooper Union counts its yearly beneficiaries by the thousands. This institution bestows its charity in the best form—that of promoting self-dependence and intellectual training for the work of life.”

XVI.

Income and Expenditures of the Trustees.—“The present trustees are ex-Mayor Edward Cooper, the founder’s son; Mr. Abram S. Hewitt, Peter Cooper’s son-in-law and business partner; Mr. Daniel F. Tiemann, Mr. John E. Parsons, and Mr. Wilson G. Hunt. It costs about \$50,000 a year to run the institution, and it is practically self-supporting, the income being derived from the rents of the stores in the lower part of the building, the great hall in the basement, and the interest on the founder’s endowment fund. But hundreds of applications are annually refused for lack of accommodations. The entire expenditures of the trustees, on the building and education from 1859 to 1882, inclusive, were only \$1,549,192. Reckoning the thousands of pupils that have passed through its classes, and the hundreds of thousands benefited by its other advantages of instruction, this comparatively small sum spent in twenty-three years will appear a very economical means to very large and useful ends.”

FINANCE AND STATESMANSHIP.

I.

No man had studied the American system of government more profoundly, nor gathered and treasured up in his heart the maxims of the Fathers of the Republic. He had begun this study at a much earlier period of life

than had any of the great statesmen and ministers of finance, with the exception probably of the younger Pitt, and he cultivated this knowledge with eagerness and assiduity to the last. On reaching his majority and going to work at Hempstead, Cooper learned that the celebrated William Cobbet had settled in the neighborhood, and his bold and radical writings had excited almost as much interest in this country as they had in Great Britain. Young Cooper became slightly acquainted with the veteran writer, and somewhat familiar with his original and startling views. But he was probably more indebted in later years, to his venerable friend, the distinguished financier, Albert Gallatin, than to any other man of his time, for the complete mastery of the vital subject of national finance, which he profoundly investigated.

II.

The world has been so taken up with Mr. Cooper as a philanthropist and promoter of education, that his claims as a statesman were to a great extent overlooked. But the time at last came when some of the public men of America, nearly caught up with his profound and sagacious views on the subject of finance.

But he had only had to go through the same experiences as other men who are ahead of their times. They are treated either with neglect or contempt, and get no hearing until the very evils which they prophesied have forced the consideration of remedies that had long been proposed, and listen to arguments which they had neither the patience nor the inclination to weigh or understand.

Mr. Cooper was among the very earliest public writers on the dangers and wrongs to the people, in destroying

their own currency, and transferring them and all their interests to the merciless control of the national banks. In fact, if any man in the history of this country, or in that of any other, foresaw with a prophetic gaze the future results of that fatal system, it was Mr. Cooper. He not only demonstrated the injustice of allowing the national banks to hold the monopoly of the currency, and on no other security than the deposit of their gold bonds, on which they drew the dividends to put in their own pockets, instead of having them retained as a growing basis for their circulation, which would have sooner secured specie payment, but the people were taxed to pay those very dividends; and thus, on all the money they borrowed from the banks, they were compelled to pay double interest, the aggregate of which has amounted to the frightful sum of hundreds of millions of dollars; yet the people did not see it, nor would the bankers or the politicians allow them to do it.

He showed that in the contraction of the greenbacks, there was not money enough left in circulation to do the legitimate business of the nation. This, too, was dinned in vain into the adder ears of the debt-ridden people.

III.

He predicted such panics as we had in 1873, and the very panic which a few years later struck us, but nobody listened to it! Never had arguments on any public question been pressed with greater clearness and soundness of reason and logic. But the country was so insensible to it all, and so thoroughly "bulldozed," that even the next monstrosity—the casting of silver out of circulation, with the taint of infamy stamped upon it—was on the point of being enacted without rebuke,

had they not been waked from their stupidity by the dreadful panic of 1873; nor did they see it after wading through the troubles which disturbed and depressed the business of the country during the next seven years.

At last, however, some impression was made; some of the most clear-headed men of the country yielded to the pressure, and the Greenback party was formed! And had any degree of wisdom prevailed in the councils of its leaders, the odium of "rag baby" and the "lying silver" currency would have been escaped.

All these results were as clearly foreseen by Mr. Cooper before, as after they took place; and he stands justified to-day by events, as being the most sagacious statesman, on that crucial test of finance, that our age has produced.

He wrote essays, letters and appeals almost without number, and gave to them a broad circulation—by the million—and in all instances at his own expense.

The banks having control of the press, neither answered these arguments, nor allowed them to be answered, if in their power to prevent it. When spoken of, they were treated with ridicule, and the bank monopoly was left to go on undisturbed, consolidating its power, and binding legislation and opinion with bands of iron.

IV.

A careful survey of this great, heroic, and persistent crusade, as waged by the writings of Mr. Cooper, will hereafter prove his title to the highest type of statesmanship, and to the gratitude of the American people. Nothing but the veto of Mr. Hayes defeated the funding bill, which gave to the banks, for the moment, the poor victory they achieved; but it was gained at a fatal

expense to them—it *Greenbackized vast masses of the nation*. The indignation excited throughout the country by the bold exposure of the power of the banks to fix the value of all property by determining the amount of paper circulation, did for a while subside, but the next check to the general prosperity—which will arise from the same cause—will inflame that indignation with greater intensity.

The time had indeed come when Senator Windom used the following language in a letter to the Anti-Monopoly League, at their public meeting at the Cooper Institute, on the 21st day of February, 1881:

“I repeat to-day, in substance, words uttered seven years ago, that ‘there are in this country four men who, in the matter of taxation, possess and frequently exercise powers which neither Congress nor any of our State Legislatures would dare to exert—powers which, if exercised in Great Britain, would shake the throne to its very foundation. These may at any time, and for any reason satisfactory to themselves, by a stroke of the pen, reduce the value of property in the United States by hundreds of millions. They may, at their own will and pleasure, disarrange and embarrass business, depress one city or locality and build another, enrich one individual and ruin his competitors, and, when complaint is made, coolly reply, “What are you going to do?”’”

And yet a few days later, General Garfield did not hesitate to put this man into the Treasury, where it was hoped monopoly would find some of its fearful power restrained, whether in railroads, banks, or telegraphs. The Secretary boldly laid down the great principle of constitutional law—that all these monopolies, the mere creatures of legislation, must be shorn of their power to do evil any longer. For putting such a man at the

head of the financial system of the country, President Garfield performed an act which brought him millions of allies, who looked forward to the emancipation of the business of the country at an early period of his administration. But his untimely death extinguished that hope. Secretary Windom would never have advised or favored an act of injustice towards any body of men acting as a legal corporation. But the appointment of such a statesman to a station of such vast power and responsibility, marks the hold which Mr. Cooper's sixteen years of tireless work had gained upon the minds and hearts of the people; and to him, more than to any other man, will posterity award the honor.

V.

The credit of even producing his own writings, now that their value and ability become apparent, was denied to him by the monopolists. Good as he was, beloved as he was, humane and generous as he had proved himself in all departments of life, they either dismissed his productions with a supercilious sneer, or denied him the credit of their authorship. "He must have had help." Had he ever asked for anybody's help, when, as a mechanic, he built with his own hands the first locomotive ever constructed in America? Had anybody helped him to found the greatest range of iron manufacture in the country? Was he not almost the only man carrying on various kinds of businesses successfully, through a period of seventy years, unscathed by a single one of the seven panics that had shaken our business world, and sent thousands of staunch men to wreck? Had anybody helped him in the wide scope of his inventions and improvements for the manufacture of iron and steel adapted to the construction of build-

ings, railroads and machinery? Who claims the credit of paying out of his own pocket three-quarters of a million of dollars to save the first Atlantic Cable, when the banks would loan the company no more money? Who claims the credit of devising and building the most valuable institute of "art and science," and the first one of any specific and practical importance, ever erected on this continent? Did the banks help him? He never trusted them with a dollar, or asked them to loan him one! Who taught him those grand principles of finance, to which the other statesmen of the country are now so fast coming?

To those who have studied the subject with care, and become familiar with Mr. Cooper's writings on finance, and the boldness and originality of his genius as displayed in a complete comprehension of the mechanical forces with the various devices to gain their control—to those who are judges of simplicity and force of style and argument—there will be discovered in Peter Cooper, merits and abilities that have seldom, if ever, been met in any of the great men that have gone before him. One of the grandest attributes of such original superiority is found in the expansive natural life he has led, when, at the age of ninety-two, his eye seemed to be yet "undimmed, and his natural force unabated."

These were some of the attributes and rare excellencies of Mr. Cooper's extraordinary character.

VI.

But his great work as a public economist and financial reformer, was not to be limited to millions of fugitive sheets which he had caused to be circulated, and he was urged from all quarters, by the statesmen of Europe and America, to embody the substance of his writ-

ings in an enduring form while yet living. He yielded to the entreaty, and to this important labor he gave the last year of his life. It was his last intellectual effort and his best. He superintended its progress through the press with perfect regularity from day to day, and sent a large edition of it to the statesmen, the thinkers, and the principal journals of the civilized world. He then felt that his work was finished, and in three days he rested from his labors, and his works do follow him.

ANALYSIS OF COOPER'S SYSTEM OF PUBLIC ECONOMY.

I.

This can best be done by such a brief review as our space admits, of his last publication, a well-printed royal octavo volume of 400 pages, entitled,

“Ideas for a Science of Good Government, in Addresses, Letters and Articles on a Strictly National Currency, Tariff and Civil Service. By Hon. Peter Cooper, I.L.D. New York: Trow’s Printing and Bookbinding Company, 201–213 East Twelfth Street. 1883.” He dedicates his book to “his children, grandchildren, and to the pupils of Cooper Institute,” and introduces it to the public in the following brief preface:

“As this compilation of ideas from my intercourse and correspondence with statesmen, divines, scholars, artists, inventors, merchants, manufacturers, mechanics and laborers, may contribute to a *Science of Good Government*, based on a *strictly national currency, tariff and civil service*, I consider it my duty to transmit them to posterity in book form.

“In our young country these three topics are of the greatest importance, and must be regarded as the foundation for all governmental superstructures. When this nation, numbering now fifty millions, can realize that before these three topics, all others must dwindle into insignificance, she will have attained the highest degree of political wisdom. I have had much personal experience in practical business and money affairs for the last seventy years: over thirty years ago I learned finance with our veteran financier, Albert Gallatin, who was Secretary of Treasury under Jefferson and Madison. He was President of The New York Board of Currency, of which I was Vice-President. About that time I corresponded with Secretary Robert J. Walker, on the tariff. Since then I have been engaged in large financial, manufacturing and educational operations, such as railroads, telegraphs, Atlantic cable, iron, steel, Cooper Institute, etc.

“This varied experience with my daily reading enabled me to think, converse, speak and write on *finance*, *tariff* and *civil service*, which I tried to combine in this volume. Since the Rebellion broke out, I have sent petitions and letters to Congress, to the President and his Cabinet, and raised my voice in favor of a strictly national currency, a protective tariff, and a wise civil service, as will appear in the following pages.

“PETER COOPER.

“9 LEXINGTON AVENUE, NEW YORK,
January 30, 1863.”

II.

In the following petition to Congress, presented December 14, 1862, when the Rebellion had fully inaugurated war, and the Government had to raise money to

defend the Union, Mr. Cooper first developed his financial views, which, if adopted in the beginning, would have saved uncounted millions to the people, and sooner suppressed that insane revolt. It was the first announcement of his *principles of finance*, to which he ever after adhered, and enforced with such signal ability:

“Your petitioner desires most respectfully to call and fix the attention of Congress on the unmeasured consequences that now depend on a speedy adoption of a financial policy, calculated to maintain the force and power of the Government in its struggle for the nation’s life, and at the same time to give the required stability and facilities, to enable the people to carry on to the best advantage, all the agricultural, mechanical, and commercial interests of the country.

“Your petitioner believes that every other act of legislation dwindles into insignificance, when compared with an act, on which all business interests are more or less dependent, and connected with the honor and life of the nation itself.

“In view of consequences and responsibilities so tremendous, your petitioner does most humbly pray, that no time should be lost in perfecting laws, that will embody the highest wisdom and virtue of an intelligent people, for the people’s benefit.

“In the opinion of your petitioner the Constitution makes it the solemn duty of Congress to coin money and regulate the value thereof, of all that shall be known and used as money throughout the United States. The faithful performance of this duty by the Government will more effectually secure the rewards of labor to the hand that earns it, and more effectually aid all the useful industries of the country, than any and all other measures, that can be adopted.”

III.

At a later period Mr. Cooper's views were more fully unfolded by another petition in which he said:

“Your petitioner, in view of the paralyzed condition of all the varied industries of our country, causing, as it has, an almost universal embarrassment by the shrinkage in values of all forms of property, thereby rendering it impossible to give the needed employment to suffering millions, who have nothing to sell but their labor—your petitioner desires humbly to represent, that in his opinion a single act of Congress, added to the lately passed financial law, will secure for the United States the best paper circulating medium that our country or the world has ever seen.

“To do this it is only necessary to set forth and declare, that the present *legal tender* money, now in circulation, shall never be increased or diminished, only as *per capita* with the increase of the inhabitants of the country, and that the Government shall receive the *legal tenders* in payment for all duties and debts, with an amount of currency equal in average value, to the average premium that gold has borne during the month preceding the maturing of all contracts.

“To secure to our country a tool, as Bonamy Price calls money, of such inestimable value, and at the same time secure for our country a degree of stability in the operations of trade and commerce hitherto unknown—to do this it will only be necessary for the Government to receive legal tenders in payment for all duties and debts, etc.

“This plan will make it the interest of every man to bring and maintain the legal tenders on a par with gold in the shortest possible time. If this can be done it will

give permanence and stability to that which measures all the property of the country, etc. . . .

“There is no way, by which Congress can so effectually establish justice and promote the welfare of a nation as by securing for it a just and uniform system of money, weights, and measures.”

IV.

One of the most striking commentaries ever printed on the financial blunders of successive administrations, was written by Mr. Cooper in January of this present year, 1883, and first published in his volume from which these citations are made. Of its historic accuracy no doubt can be entertained, while it forcibly illustrates the sagacity and soundness of his financial opinions.

He says: “I learned from my friend, Silas M. Stilwell, who was the confidential adviser of Secretary Chase, at the time of our nation’s greatest peril, that he saw my petition in the hand of Secretary Chase, at the time when he was saying, that he had some fifty millions of bills audited, and not a dollar in the Treasury. In such a dilemma with the fact before him, that the first four loans, called for, were promptly taken up, and more money was offered at five and six per cent than the call would allow them to take !

“Mr. Stilwell stated, that he had labored with Secretary Chase for two or three weeks, trying to show him, that *Treasury Notes*, based on the credit of the nation and made receivable for all forms of taxes, duties, and debts, would be gladly accepted by the people, and that without a promise to pay gold.

“Mr. Chase was determined, that no paper should be issued, without promise to pay gold and silver on demand. Mr. Stilwell labored for many days to show how

interest could be used as a floating power for *Treasury Notes* with the *Legal Tender* principle as a forcing power, which would float an amount of *Treasury Notes*, that would meet all the expenses of the war.

“This plan would have been, in effect, like the plan, recommended by Franklin and Jefferson. Benjamin Franklin said, that ‘no plan had ever been devised, equal in all its advantages for a currency, to *Treasury Notes*, made a *general Legal Tender*.’

“Having labored for many days to convince Secretary Chase without effect, Mr. Stilwell informed him, that he believed his services were at an end, and that he should leave that evening for his home in New York.

“Mr. Stilwell told me, that he had only just got home, when he received a telegram, begging him to come immediately back, as he had learned, that the banks had all failed to pay specie, as they had promised.

“Thomas Jefferson unites with Franklin, and declares, ‘That *Treasury Notes*, bottomed on taxes, bearing or not bearing interest, is the only fund, on which the Government can rely for loans; and it is an abundant one for every necessary purpose.’

“The plan, recommended by Jefferson was, and is, in exact accordance with the imperative demand of a Constitution, expressly formed to establish justice.

“Mr. Stilwell returned at the request of Secretary Chase, who then asked him to write out the propositions he had made. On the urgent request of Secretary Chase, Mr. Stilwell wrote out his plan for the issue of *Treasury Notes* on the principle Jefferson had declared to be the only one, on which the Government could rely for loans.

“Mr. Jefferson, in view of the banks that then existed, declared that ‘*bank paper must be suppressed, and*

the circulating medium must be restored to the nation, to whom it properly belongs.'

"Secretary Chase was compelled by the overwhelming powers of a terrible war, to finally consent to adopt the plan, written out by Mr. Stilwell; and he says: '*he was forced to cut up small pieces of paper to circulate as money, based on the credit of the people, whose property it was intended to represent.*'

"That paper," continues Mr. Cooper with irresistible force, "was real *fiat* money, with the stamp of the Government on it, declaring its first issues as a full *Legal Tender in payment of all debts, public and private; and at the option of its owner, convertible into a bond, bearing five and six per cent interest for the amount so converted.* There has been no day since when that money was not worth as much as gold."

V.

Then follows the terrible indictment against the suicidal policy which successive administrations have pursued, which transferred the control of the currency into the hands of the national banks, and enabled them to precipitate the crises and panics that have brought fearful ruin on the country, and against which the business world has been powerless to provide. Understanding the cause and the remedy, Mr. Cooper adds:

"During the last twenty years, I have sent thousands of documents broad-cast over our country. In all I have written, I tried to make plain the fact, that the Government of our country has, by a train of unconstitutional, invalidating financial laws, wrongfully taken from the American people, since our late war, more than seventeen hundred millions of dollars, that were actually paid by the Government for value received in the labor and

property, that were used and consumed in the prosecution of the terrible war, through which we have passed.

“It fell to my lot in the early part of my business life, to learn an invaluable lesson from the disgraceful failure of the United States Bank. I saw that bank with its thirty-five millions of dollars capital, authorized to issue four dollars of paper for every dollar of their capital, and all in promise to pay silver and gold on demand. I knew, that such a bank, with its branches in every State, would be a power that our Government could never control.

“S. M. Stilwell in his essay on banking, says: ‘We, as a nation, have experimented with, and dealt in, all kinds of credits from individual to national, etc. . . . We had private bankers, State banks, and twice we have tried national banks; and all have proved unsafe and unsatisfactory. The plain command, found in the Constitution to regulate commerce between the States, has been neglected by Congress; and instead of binding the States together for commercial purposes, the money-power has been left to the separate States, to be exercised under a doubtful construction of the organic law.’”

VI.

Mr. Cooper had studied the Constitution early, and the legislation of Congress more carefully, and understood the views of the Fathers of the Republic better, than most of our modern statesmen. He invoked old laws—never abrogated—and old examples long forgotten, which the Founders had, in their admirable foresight, interposed to possible dangers likely to assail us. He reminded his contemporaries, that Washington and John Adams were opposed to allowing bank officials to occupy seats in either branch of Congress. He says:

“On page 20 of the Journal of the United States Senate, first session of the Third Congress, convened at Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, December 2, 1793, can be found the following resolution, offered on the 23d of December the same year, and passed by the United States Senate with but two dissenting votes, and signed by George Washington, President, and John Adams, Vice-President: ‘ANY PERSON, HOLDING ANY OFFICE OR ANY STOCK IN ANY INSTITUTION IN THE NATURE OF A BANK FOR ISSUING OR DISCOUNTING BILLS OR NOTES PAYABLE TO BEARER OR ORDER, CANNOT BE A MEMBER OF THE HOUSE WHILST HE HOLDS SUCH OFFICE OR STOCK.’

“Yet, a late Congress was composed of *one hundred and twenty bankers*, ninety-nine lawyers, fourteen merchants, thirteen manufacturers, seven doctors, four mechanics, and not a single farmer or day laborer. This agrees with a statement made by Moses W. Field, M. C.

“I think this law was invoked to prevent A. T. Stewart, the largest importer of foreign goods, from becoming Secretary of the Treasury.

“Why should it not be enforced now to oust speculators from our Congress, where they are making laws in their own favor, and against the interest of the people?

“The wise men, who achieved the Independence, drafted the Constitution, and established our Government, well knew that it was unsafe to trust the governmental law-making to bankers, usurers, or any one interested in such business. They knew it was morally impossible for persons, interested in money-lending, not to attempt to legislate in their own favor, and *against* the good of the people.

“I ever did, and ever shall, advocate a purely national

currency, as long as I live, as the only remedy against periodic stagnation, caused by special legislation, suggested and voted by banking representatives and speculators in the seats of our Congress."

"Washington and Adams tried to imitate the Master, in driving the *money-changers* out of Congress; but as yet their legislation has not succeeded as Christ did nineteen centuries ago. We must hope the people will become so enlightened, as to expel them by an overwhelming vote.

"Washington declared a fact, when he said, that 'In exact proportion as we either alloy the precious metals, or admit poor paper money into the volume of the circulating medium, just in that proportion will everything in a country rise, and labor will be the first that will feel it. It will not benefit the farmer, nor the mechanic, as it will only enable the debtor to pay his debt with a shadow, instead of a substance.'

"This was in answer to a letter from a member of the Maryland Legislature, asking Washington's opinion as to the right of a State to issue *paper money*. He did not believe in *contraction* and *inflation*, which cause periodic *panics*."

Never has a more withering appeal been made to a body—yes, two bodies, the Senate and the House of Representatives—to halt in the making of laws in direct conflict with the legislation and convictions of the men who made us a nation. Mr. Cooper was indeed denounced by the politicians of his time, but he and his coadjutors did interpose some restraint on their reckless, and otherwise fatal legislation. It is more owing to him, than to all other men, that Congress did not work more ruin than it did.

VII.

Mr. Cooper can always best interpret himself, and I prefer still to let him do it. In one of his most logical and convincing papers of the time, and which had a very wide circulation, he used the following language:

“The nation having found itself in a terrible war, and having exhausted all the means in its power to obtain gold and silver to meet the wants of the Government, our people were compelled to see the country overpowered by its enemies, or to resort to a kind of forced loan, drawing from the people by taking all forms of their property and labor, and giving them in payment treasury notes, demand notes, and the several forms of bonds in the shape of a currency to obtain the necessary supplies to move and maintain armies, sufficient to save the life of the nation. When the great and good work was accomplished, a work, which gold and silver had failed to perform, then the amounts so expended for that purpose, should have been regarded as the most sacred treasure of the country, and should have been made the permanent, unfluctuating measure of all values throughout our whole country for all coming time, and never to be increased or diminished, only as *per capita* with the increase of the inhabitants of the country.

“To ordain and secure such an unfluctuating measure of all values for all property throughout the vast extent of our country, and make gold perform its proper function, would have been a compensation of more, than equal value to the country, to more than replace the whole cost of the war of the Rebellion.

“The currency, so expended in saving the life of the nation, should have been considered of more value than

gold itself; because it performed a work that was entirely out of the power of gold and silver to accomplish; so that every dollar, expended in whatever shape, or whatever kind of value received, became as so much money, placed in the hands of the people, and would not only have enabled them to carry on the war, but to pay the entire debt of the nation without inconvenience, if the amount of the people's money, found in circulation at the close of the war, had been allowed to remain as the tools of trade, the life-blood of commerce in their possession; but by shrinking the currency, and by taxing the people, and then taking their money to purchase bonds that were not due for twenty years, when the people were more in need of their own means, and the aid of Government, than ever before, to enable them to provide for the disbanded army, that had no other means to live, or anything to sell but their labor; by the shrinkage of the currency, all forms of labor were dried up. The source of all consumption and production, was alike destroyed, and a general ruin spread far and wide over our country.

“Had the original law, which made paper money receivable for all forms of duties and debts, and convertible into six per cent interest-bearing bonds, been continued, we would not only have had all our bonds taken at home, but prosperity would have still smiled on our country.

“As it is now, the Government has taken from the people the tools of their trade, and has used its power contrary to the interests of the people, in the purchase of bonds not due for twenty years, loading the people with taxes, destroying and breaking up the business of the country.

“Nothing short of a compliance with the very first

requirement of the Constitution, will stay the torrent of evil, and restore prosperity again to our suffering people. The establishment of justice demands, that the people should have the same amount of currency continued, to enable them to pay the debts of the nation, that was required to enable them to prosecute the war.

“The Government, having taken all forms of property and labor from the people, gave them treasury notes as an equivalent for gold, as long as they had it; and when they had not the paper promise of the Government, legal tenders, receivable for debts, taxes, etc.”

VIII.

In the modern age of our Republic, no body of citizens has been formed for high patriotic purposes, that could claim superiority in any respect over the Union League Club of New York City. Mr. Cooper was one of its early members, and from first to last held the most exalted rank in their esteem. It may be well imagined with what deep interest these words of their aged associate were regarded during one of the most depressing periods of American business:

“*Mr. President and Gentlemen of the Union League Club*: I find myself impelled by an irresistible desire to call and fix the attention of every lover of his kind and country on those appalling causes, that have so effectually paralyzed the varied industries of our people. Those causes have been sufficient to shrink the real estate of the nation to one half the amount it would have brought three years ago; and that without having shrunk at the same time any of the debts, which had been contracted by the use of money, authorized by the Government of our country. There is nothing, that can be more important, than to find out and remove the

causes, that are bringing bankruptcy and ruin to the homes of millions of the most industrious men of our nation. The national policy, which has brought this frightful calamity on our people, should receive the most thorough investigation and the most decided action by the Government of our country. There is but one way of relief out of all this national trouble and sorrow. The people themselves must enforce upon the administration the obligations, laid down in the Constitution, "to establish justice, and thus secure the general welfare of the nation." To do this, let us take it out of the power of States or Corporations to make, or unmake, the money of the country. It is the sole duty of the Government to coin money, as the Constitution requires. Let the Government itself, through its Administration, be restrained from meddling capriciously with the currency, and only under permanent laws and a well-understood and predetermined policy, always having reference to the good of the people.

"Let us have a national currency, issued solely by the authority and supported in circulation by the taxing power and the solvency of our Government. Such a currency should be fixed in volume, as *per capita*, to the amount of the people's money, actually found in circulation at the close of the war; and it should be made as certain and as permanent in value in its measuring power as the yard, pound, and bushel, by its being made redeemable for all Government taxes and debts, except duties on imports. Our Government is bound by the requirements of the Constitution to make the necessary and proper law, as well as a legal tender money for all private debts. This currency must be always *interconvertible* with Government bonds at a low rate of interest, as compared with active investment.

It should be a currency, which a bank or corporation cannot rightfully issue, enlarge, or contract in its own interest, and which cannot be taken from the hands of the people by the 'ever-shifting balances of commodities' between nations, as is the case with gold and silver, when used as money. It will not be subject to any sudden contractions or expansions, but will be regulated by established law, based on scientific facts and principles of a just system of national finances. The treasury notes can be made just such a currency. This currency can always be kept on an average par with gold, or the currency of any other country, by the encouragement and the support, which it will give to the industry and the productiveness of the country. It will increase indefinitely the country's exporting power. We will then pay our balances with other nations with our surplus products, and have but little occasion for the use of gold and silver to pay balances of trade. We can in no way become an exporting nation, except by stimulating our own productiveness, diversified and enlarged in every direction of human industry in which our materials are as good and abundant as those of other nations, and the labor and skill are ready for use, if properly encouraged. *For this purpose I believe it will be wise for us to remove all internal taxation, and rely solely on a sufficient revenue tariff to meet the expenses of Government.* This subject is very much misunderstood or misrepresented by our own advocates of free trade. It is the surplus productions of foreign countries mostly, that reach our shores as imports, and it is also the surplus capital of the importers and foreigners, that is employed to bring them here. Hence it is but right to tax this surplus for the absolute wants of our own domestic industry and capital. This is precisely what a

tariff accomplishes. It taxes the importer and foreigner chiefly, who must find a market somewhere, and those of our people, who will buy and use foreign products, which leave our own good raw materials unused, and our own domestic laborers unemployed. This is violating the first law of nature—self-preservation. Let us take care of our own people here at home, as the first duty of our own Government. And let us not make the great mistake of the governing classes in France, England, and Germany, where the wages of the operatives and workingmen are reduced to a bare subsistence.

“It is this ignorance or want of patriotism, that stands in the way of the public weal, both in the management of our finances, and the adoption of a judicious tariff. The people alone can vindicate their rights, and secure their own welfare, by taking an intelligent and proper interest in the administration of their own Government. Let them require from this Administration a return to the principles of public justice and equal rights. Let the Government be required in some proper way to restore to the people the tools of their trade and commerce, which have been so unjustly and cruelly taken from them. Let there be provision made for the return of the whole of that currency found in circulation at the close of the Rebellion, which was worked out and paid for by the people in the labor, material, and service which they had rendered to the Government during our struggle for the nation's life. It was a currency, which had lifted the American people into a state of unexampled prosperity, never before known in this or any other country, and which can be restored to the people by the issue of treasury notes, paid out for the necessary expenses of Government, for the execution of

great necessary international works, such as the Northern and Southern Pacific railroads, which, when made, will strengthen the bonds of the Union, and open a vast country, with its untold wealth, for the enterprise and labor of the people. I have sounded these notes of encouragement, warning, and advice time and again; because I believe they are for the peace and happiness of our country.

“At my advanced age I have no personal ambition or motive left but the welfare of mankind, and the prosperity of my beloved country. If it were the last word I should utter with my dying breath, I should warn the people of this country against the insidious wiles of professed politicians, who are seeking for the spoils of office and the attractions of power—men, who are ready to lend themselves to all special and partial acts of legislation, if they can only advance their own individual interests. Such men oppose *civil service* because it will curtail their political patronage; such men barter the rights, the prosperity, and even the bread of the people, in order to share in the spoils and the temporary gains, which are thrown into the hands of a few by a pernicious system of banking, of which the periodical panics of our country bear a frightful record. They are the natural outgrowth of the same injurious system.

“My arguments will be confirmed by a reference to the facts, stated in the following letter in relation to the currency by F. E. Spinner, the former Assistant Secretary. Mr. Spinner says, that there was put in circulation, in all the forms of six per cent, five per cent, and 3.65 per cent, of legal tender money, \$1,152,924,-892, besides the seven-thirties, \$830,000,000, which Mr. Spinner says were intended, prepared, and used as cur-

rency. This amount had been paid out as so many dollars, and had become the people's money, which the Government was then and forever, bound to receive from the people as legal tender dollars for every form of taxes, duties, and debts. The failure of the Government to do that duty has cost the nation thousands of millions of dollars. It will be recollected by many members of this Club, that we were favored on a former occasion by Prof. White, of Cornell University, with an account of the losses, sustained by the people of France by the use of assignats, authorized by that Government. I have always regretted, that my esteemed friend, Prof. White, had not gone far enough into the true history of the rise and progress of the assignats, to see that the injurious losses, occasioned by them, did not arise from an improper action of the republican Government, but from the combined powers of the internal and external enemies of the Republic. This will appear by the following facts:

“The assignats of France were based on the confiscated property of the clergy and nobility, in which both the clergy and nobility had a deep interest, that led them to denounce the assignats, as based on theft and outrage. There was another royal party, which united in declaring that their lands had been taken without any of the forms of law; and therefore the title still remained in the clergy. The parties all united in declaring, that the assignats were utterly without any basis to secure their redemption. The parties never ceased to agitate and war on the credit of the assignats. But finding the Revolution too strong for them, and that its cause was being so successfully strengthened by conquering the enemies of liberty and of the nation, that other nations were yielding to its power, that its armies

were victorious, and that its principles, as developed by the Constitution and laws, were such as reason and humanity approved, history tells us, that all the enemies of the new French Government united in an effort to destroy the power of the new government by circulating counterfeit assignats in every direction. The counterfeiting commenced in 1792 in Belgium and Switzerland, and was used extensively, as the best means of destroying the power of the Republic. It was found by the nobility, that Belgium and Switzerland were too much in sympathy with the revolutionists to be trusted. They then extended their operations to London, where they found more scope and greater opportunities for uninterrupted work. History charges, that England lent her aid by allowing 'seventeen manufacturing establishments in operation in London, with a force of four hundred men, in the production of the assignats.'

"It was found that 12,000,000,000 of counterfeit francs had been circulated in France, when only 7,860,000,000 of francs had been issued by the Government, showing that the danger of an over-issue was from the enemies of the Government, and not from the Government itself. The assessed value of the property, on which were based the 7,860,000,000 of francs, was, in 1795, 15,000,000,000, showing, that as long as the confiscation of property was maintained by the Government, the assignats had good security for their redemption.

"It is more than probable, that we shall see again what are called 'prosperous times,' when the banks have annihilated our greenback currency, and have substituted their own money, on the old and false pretence of a 'specie basis,' which makes their money 'as good

as gold,' until the gold is really wanted. But I warn my countrymen that this will be a baseless prosperity, that can only last while there are any securities or property, that can be pledged for loans, the loans themselves being puffed up under the conceit that they are payable in gold; then another crash will come, and we shall have the same scenes of desolation and suffering, that we have experienced as a people for the past three years.

"I do most earnestly beseech the American people to see to it, that their chosen rulers are men, imbued with the spirit and letter of the Constitution, which, after a great struggle, was enacted 'to establish justice, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity.'"

IX.

I come now to the last quotations from the essays, letters, and addresses of Mr. Cooper on Political Economy, as they appear in his great volume. They refer to his views on the subject of Protection of the industry of his country, and I believe they were his last public utterances. Of them he said:

"While they were printing the last pages of this book, I was preparing this short address, to be delivered February 1, 1883, at the meeting of "The New York Association for the Protection of American Industry," in the large Hall of Cooper Institute. As it may be my last public address, I add it here:

"We have assembled, my friends, to call your attention to one of the most important subjects, that can now claim the care of the American people. The advocates of free trade with foreign nations, are trying to

persuade our Government and people, that it is for our interest to buy from other countries all the luxuries they have to offer.

“ ‘These advocates of free trade propose, that our own mechanics shall either work at the starvation prices of the foreign laborers, or be forced to abandon their trades and become competitors with the agriculturists of the country.

“ ‘If we desire to bring upon our whole nation a fate similar to that, which has fallen to the lot of Ireland, Turkey, Mexico, and Hindostan, it is only necessary to arrange our tariff in a way, that will induce the people to have all their manufacturing done in foreign countries, and pay for it with the raw materials of our own. Such a policy will, if I am not mistaken, secure for our Union of States as rapid a decline and fall as that which fell to the lot of Spain, when the Moors, her principal manufacturers, were driven out of the country. Such a policy might gratify our thirst for all the dearly bought follies and fashions of European life; but it would bring ruin and wretchedness upon hundreds of thousands of the mechanics of our country, who have nothing to sell but their labor.

“ ‘To break up this diversified employment of so vast a number by a change of tariff, and then expect them to find for themselves other means of living, is about as reasonable as it was for Pharaoh to expect the Israelites to make bricks without straw.’ ”

X.

This portion of my brief sketch may not perhaps possess any charm for youthful readers, who cannot easily understand *the true principles of good government*. But they may, in riper years, see their vast significance.

I could not, however, omit this great feature of Mr. Cooper's life as an illuminated statesman, without presenting a very much more incomplete portrait of him than I wished to paint, and I thought it better to quote his own words, than to attempt any feeble summary of them myself. Early scholarship could have done him no good. His honest, strong, earnest Anglo-Saxon needed none of the embellishments of art. It corresponded perfectly with the directness of his purposes, and the *naïve* simplicity of his character. He was a stranger to artifice. He went as straight to his object, as a carrier pigeon to its home cote. He had no more idea of deceit or evasion, than a man born blind has of colors. These passions ruled his life. He worshipped a common Father of mankind, and loved all men as his brothers. He *worshipped* the One, and took the others to his bosom.

On one of the balmy evenings of last autumn, I found my walk had led me by his house, and seeing him sitting near the window, I crossed the door sill and entered his familiar room on the first floor. It was a favored moment to see the real living Peter Cooper. He sat in perfect repose in his easy-chair looking away through the twilight, and his calm face appeared so serene I was half afraid I had disturbed him, and said so. "Oh, no, no; sit down: I am glad you came in. Can you guess what I was thinking of? Well, when I am in one of those quiet reveries which we are all apt to indulge in at the close of the day after its work is done, and the curtains of night are being drawn so tenderly around us by the loving Father's hands, I recall many of the blessed things we have read years and years ago. Well, Pope's "Universal Prayer" came back to me a little while since, so fresh, and it struck me very for-

cibly. Will you let me go over it *aloud*, and see if I have forgotten it?

Father of All! In every age,
In every clime adored
By saint, by savage and by sage,
Jehovah, Jove or Lord!
Thou Great First Cause, least understood,
Who all my sense confined
To know but this, that thou art good,
And I myself am blind;
Yet gave me in this dark estate
To see the good from ill,
And binding Nature fast in fate,
Left free the human will.
What conscience dictates to be done
Or warns me not to do,
This teach me more than hell to shun,
That more than heaven pursue.
What blessings Thy free bounty gives
Let me not cast away;
For God is paid when man receives:
To enjoy is to obey.
Yet not to earth's contracted span
Thy goodness let me bound,
Or think Thee, Lord, alone of man
When thousand worlds are round.
Let not this weak unknowing hand
Presume Thy bolts to throw,
And deal damnation round the land
On each I judge Thy foe.
If I am right, Thy grace impart
Still in the right to stay;
If I am wrong, oh, teach my heart
To find that better way.
Save me alike from foolish pride,
Or impious discontent
At aught thy wisdom has denied,
At aught Thy goodness lent.
Teach me to feel another's woe,
To hide the fault I see;

That mercy I to others show
That mercy show to me,
Mean though I am, not wholly so,
Since quickened by thy breath;
Oh lead me wheresoe'er I go
Through this day's life or death!
This day be bread and peace my lot;
All else beneath the sun
Thou know'st if best bestowed or not,
And let Thy will be done.
To Thee whose temple is all space,
Whose altar, earth, sea, skies!
One chorus let all Being raise,
All nature's incense rise!

He spoke more and more earnestly, and as he went on, his voice grew tremulous with feeling, and large tears rolled from his glistening blue eyes down his smooth and still ruddy cheeks, and looking upward, he exclaimed, "Oh, my dear friend, if everybody felt as Pope did when he wrote those words, what a world this would be!" As I gazed into the beaming face of the patriarch and philanthropist, it seemed to me the most beautiful countenance I had ever seen.

A PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE.

I.

Mr. Cooper had no aspirations for any political office whatever, least of all for the office of President of the United States: he never dreamed of it. But his views on the vital subjects of Finance and Good Government had been so widely circulated, and made so deep an impression upon the minds of candid, patriotic and clear-headed men everywhere, that a party under the name of the National Independent Party had come

forward to advocate them, and test the chances of their triumph in a broad appeal to the independent electors of the country in the approaching election.

There was one man alone, among forty millions of Americans, to whom all eyes were turned for a candidate, and in a great National Convention held at Indianapolis on the 17th of May, 1876, Peter Cooper was unanimously chosen, on the following Platform as a Declaration of Principles:

“The Independent Party is called into existence by the necessities of the people, whose industries are prostrated, whose labor is deprived of its just reward, as the result of the serious mismanagement of the national finances, which errors both the Republican and Democratic parties neglect to correct. In view of the failure of these parties to furnish relief to the depressed industries of the country, thereby disappointing the just hopes and expectations of a suffering people, we declare our principles and invite all independent and patriotic men to join our ranks in this movement for financial reform, and industrial emancipation.

First—We demand the immediate and unconditional repeal of the Specie-resumption Act of January 14, 1875, and the rescue of our industries from the disaster and ruin resulting from its enforcement; and we call upon all patriotic men to organize in every Congressional district of the country, with the view of electing representatives to Congress who will legislate for, and a Chief Magistrate who will carry out the wishes of the people in this regard, and thus stop the present suicidal and destructive policy of contraction.

Second—We believe that United States notes, issued directly by the Government and convertible on demand into United States obligations, bearing an equitable

rate of interest (not exceeding one cent a day on each one hundred dollars), and interchangeable with United States notes at par, will afford the best circulating medium ever devised; such United States notes should be a full legal tender for all purposes, except for the payment of such obligations as are by existing contracts expressly made payable in coin. And we hold that it is the duty of the Government to provide such a circulating medium, and we insist, in the language of Thomas Jefferson, "that bank paper must be suppressed and the circulation restored to the nation, to whom it belongs."

Third—It is the paramount duty of the Government in all its legislation to keep in view the full development of all legitimate business—agricultural, mining, manufacturing and commercial.

Fourth—We most earnestly protest against any further issue of gold bonds, for sale in foreign markets, by means of which we would be made, for a longer period, hewers of wood and drawers of water for foreign nations, especially as the American people would gladly and promptly take at par, all the bonds the Government may need to sell, provided they are made payable at the option of the holder, although bearing interest at three and sixty-five one hundredths per cent per annum, or even a lower rate.

Fifth—We further protest against the sale of Government bonds for the purpose of buying silver to be used as a substitute for our more convenient and less fluctuating fractional currency, which, although well calculated to enrich the owners of silver mines, yet in operation will still further oppress through taxation, an already overburdened people."

II.

Mr. Cooper heartily approved the platform, and felt obliged to accept the nomination, but only *conditionally*, saying in letter:

“ While I most heartily thank the Convention through you for the great honor they have thus conferred upon me, kindly permit me to say, that there is a bare possibility, if wise counsel prevails, that the sorely needed relief from the blighting effects of past unwise legislation, relative to finance, which the people so earnestly seek, may yet be had through either the Republican or Democratic party; both of them meeting in national convention at an early date. It is unnecessary for me to assure you that, while I have no aspiration for the position of Chief Magistrate of this great Republic, I will most cheerfully do what I can to forward the best interests of my country. I, therefore, accept your nomination, *conditionally*, expressing the earnest hope, that the Independent Party may yet attain its exalted aims, while permitting me to step aside and remain in that quiet, which is most congenial to my nature and time of life.”

III.

But before the nomination was made, Mr. Cooper had laid before the Convention the following ADDRESS, which presents so fair and eloquent an exposition of his financial principles, that it may justly claim a place even in so brief a sketch as this.

“ *Gentlemen of the Convention :*

“ We have met, my friends, to unite in a course of efforts to find out, and, *if possible*, to remove a cause of evil, that has shrunk the value of the real estate of the

nation to a condition, where it cannot be sold, or mortgages obtained on it, for much more than one half the amount, that the same property would have brought three years ago. This dire calamity has been brought on our country by the acts of our Government. The first act took from the national money its power to pay interest on bonds and duties on imports. The second act has contracted the currency of the country, until it has shrunk the value of property to its present condition by destroying public confidence; and that without shrinking any of the debts contracted in its use.

“I do most humbly hope, that I will be able to show the fatal causes, which have been allowed to operate, and bring this wretchedness and ruin to the homes of untold thousands of men and women throughout our country.

“Facts will show, that it was the unwise acts of our own Government, that has allowed a policy to prevail, more in the interest of foreign Governments than our own.

“It was these unwise acts of legislation, that brought discredit on our national money, as I have said, by introducing into the law, which created it, that *terrible* word *except*, which took from our legal money its power to pay interest on bonds, and duties on imports.

“The introduction of that little word *except* into the original law *drew tears from the eyes* of Thaddeus Stephens, when he looked down the current of events, and saw our bonds in the hands of foreigners, who would be receiving a gold interest on every hundred dollars of bonds, that cost them but fifty or sixty dollars in gold.

“*But* for the introduction of that word *except* into the original law, our bonds would have been taken at

par by our own people, and the interest would have been paid at home in currency, instead of being paid to foreigners in gold.

“An additional calamity has been brought on our country by a national policy, that has taken from the people their *currency, the tools of their trades*, the very life-blood of the traffic and commerce of our country.

“Facts show, that in 1865 there were in the hands of the people, as a currency, \$58 *per head*, and that at a time of our greatest national prosperity.

“We have now arrived at a time of unequalled adversity, with a currency in 1875 of \$17 $\frac{33}{100}$ *per head*, with failures, amounting to two hundred millions of dollars in a year.

“Among the causes, that now afflict the country, it may be well to *look* at the enormous increase in our foreign importations, which amounted to 359 millions in the year 1868, increased to 684 millions of dollars in 1873, and were 574 millions of dollars in 1875.*

* The following is a statement of the interest of money paid by the United States since the close of the war of the Rebellion. The following statement shows, that \$1,422,057,577 has been paid in interest in 11 $\frac{3}{4}$ years:

Principal—Interest-bearing.....	\$1,717,642,130
Non interest-bearing.....	473,923,757
	<u>\$2,191,565,887</u>
Interest due on above.....	33,092,616
	<u>\$2,224,658,503</u>
Less cash in Treasury.....	154,299,886
	<u>Debt at May 1, 1877..... \$2,070,358,617</u>
Debt at July 7, 1866.....	2,783,425,879
	<u>Reduction since July 1, 1866 (10 10-12 years). \$713,067,262</u>

Since the close of the war, or from July 1, 1865, to April 1, 1877,

"I think you will agree with me, when I say, that prosperity can never be restored to our beloved country, by a national policy that enforces idleness and financial distress on so vast a number of the laborers and business men of this country. Our nation's wealth must forever depend on the application of knowledge, economy, and well-directed labor to all the useful and necessary purposes of life, but also a proper legislation for the people.

"The American people can never buy anything cheap from foreign countries that must be bought *at the cost of leaving our own good raw materials unused, and our own labor unemployed.*

"I find myself compelled to believe that much of the past legislation of our country, in reference to tariff and currency, has been adopted under the advice and influence of men in the interest of foreign nations, that have

(11¾ years), the interest on the public debt was \$1,422,057,567, or \$121,000,000 per annum!

The universal cry over the land is for employment. When well employed the people are well clothed, well fed and well housed. The adjustment of the fiscal question—not *for one class*, but for the *masses*—must be made ere prosperity is ours. The recall from Europe of our gold bonds (by sale of commodities, placing them at low interest) and substituting greenbacks for national bank-notes, would remove grievous burdens, providing employment by stimulating our depressed industries.

Will President Hayes inaugurate this just policy, insuring general prosperity and spontaneous "resumption," or the par of paper with gold?

The true remedy for national relief from the enslavement of debt, with its burden of taxation, is the substitution of greenbacks for national bank-notes.

The national banks have received since 1866, twenty-one millions of dollars interest on bonds deposited with the Government.

a direct motive to mislead and deceive us. Our prosperity as a nation will commence to return when the Congress of our country shall assume its own inherent sovereign right to furnish all the inhabitants of the United States a redeemable, uniform, unfluctuating national currency.

“I do heartily agree with Senator Jones when he says that ‘the present is the acceptable time to undo the unwitting and blundering work of 1873; and to render our legislation on the subject of money, consistent with the physical facts concerning the stock and supply or the precious metals throughout the world, and conformable to the Constitution of our country.’

“I sincerely hope that the concluding advice of Senator Jones will make a living and lasting impression, when he says, speaking to the present Senate, ‘We cannot, we dare not, avoid speedy action on the subject. Not only does reason, justice, and authority unite in urging us to retrace our steps, but the organic law commands us to do so; and the presence of peril enjoins what the law commands.’

“The Senator states a most important fact, and one which all know to be true, ‘that by interfering with the standards of the country, Congress has led the country away from the realms of prosperity, and thrust it beyond the bounds of safety.’ He says, truly, ‘to refuse to replace it upon its former vantage-ground would be to incur a responsibility and a deserved reproach greater than that which men have ever before felt themselves able to bear.’

“It will require all the wisdom that can be gathered from the history and experience of the past, to enable us to work out our salvation from the evils which an unwise legislation has brought on our country.

“It will be found that nothing short of a full, fair, and frank performance of the first duty, enjoined on Congress by the Constitution, will ever restore permanent prosperity to us as a nation.

.

“It is a remarkable fact, that the most essential element of our colonial and national prosperity was obtained by the use of the *legal tender paper money*—the very thing that our present rulers seem now determined to ridicule and bring into contempt. We are apt to forget that the continental money secured for us a country, and the greenback currency has saved us a nation.

“Sir A. Alison, the able and indefatigable English historian, has borne testimony to the superior power and value of paper money. He says: ‘When sixteen hundred thousand men, on both sides, were in the continental wars with France in Germany and Spain alone, where nothing could be purchased except by specie, it is not surprising that guineas went, where they were so much needed, and bore so high a price. . . . In truth, such was the need of precious metals, owing to this cause, that one tenth of the currency of the world was attracted to Germany as a common centre, and the demand could not be supplied; and by a decree in September, 1813, from Peterwalsden, in Germany, the allied sovereigns issued paper notes, guaranteed by Russia, Prussia, and England. These notes passed as cash from Kamtschatka to the Rhine, and gave the currency which brought the war to a successful close.’

“In a recent edition of the ‘History of Europe,’ Sir A. Alison gives an additional evidence of the important advantages which experience has demonstrated to result from the use of paper currency.

“He says: ‘To the suspension of cash payments by

the act of 1797, and the power in consequence, vested in the Bank of England, of expanding its paper circulation in proportion to the abstraction of a metallic currency, the wants of the country, and the resting of the national industry on a basis, not liable to be taken away by the mutations of commerce or the necessities of war—it is to these facts that the salvation of the empire must be ascribed. . . . It is remarkable that this admirable system, which may be truly called the working power of nations during war, because at the close of the war the object of the most determined hostility on the part of the great capitalists and chief writers of Political Economy in the country. . . . Here,’ says Sir A. Alison, ‘as everywhere else, experience, the great test of the truth, has determined the question. The adoption of the opposite system of contracting the paper currency, in proportion to the abstraction of the metallic currency by the acts of 1819 and 1844, followed, as they were, by the monetary crises of 1825, 1839, and 1847, have demonstrated beyond a doubt that it was in the system of an expansive currency, that Great Britain, during the war, found the sole means of her salvation. From 1797 to 1815, commerce, manufactures and agriculture advanced in England, in spite of all the evils of war, with a rapidity greater than they had previously done in centuries before. This proves beyond a doubt the power of paper money to increase the wealth of a nation.’

“It is worth while to observe, that this same Sir A. Alison, who speaks so wisely on this subject in reference to the history of his own country, while scanning a few years ago the prosperity of our country, during the war of the Rebellion and immediately after, has a foreboding of what might happen, and remarks: ‘The

American Government may make financial and legislative mistakes, which may check the progress of the nation and counteract the advantages which paper money has already bestowed upon them; they may adopt the unwise and unjust system which England adopted at the close of the French war; they may resolve to pay in gold, and with low prices, the debt contracted with paper and with high prices. But whatever they may do,' he adds, 'nothing can shake the evidence which the experience of that nation during the last six years affords of the power of paper money to promote a nation's welfare.'

"Sir Walter Scott, in his *Malachi Margrowther's Letters*, shows how the wealth of a nation is increased by paper money. 'I assume,' he says, 'without hazard of contradiction, that banks have existed in Scotland for nearly one hundred and twenty years; that they have flourished, and the country has flourished with them; and that during the last twenty years particularly the notes, and especially the small notes, which the banks distribute, supply all the demand for a medium of currency. This system has so completely expelled gold from Scotland, that you never by any chance espy a guinea there, except in the purse of an accidental stranger, or in the coffers of the banks themselves. But the facilities which this paper has afforded to the industrious and enterprising agriculturists and manufacturers, as well as to the trustees of the public, in executing national works, have converted Scotland from a poor, miserable, barren country into one where, if nature has done less, art and industry have done more than, perhaps, in any other country in Europe, England not excepted.'

"President Grant, in his message of 1873, said: 'The

experience of the present panic has proven that the currency of the country, based, as it is, upon its credit, is the best that has ever been devised. . . . In view of the great actual contraction that has taken place in the currency, and the comparative contraction continuously going on, due to the increase of the population, the increase of manufactories, and of all industries, I do not believe there is too much of it now for the dullest period of the year.'

"Notwithstanding these recommendations of the President, Congress has continued to tax the people and contract the national currency in a vain effort to arrive at specie payments. Our Government should have left that amount of currency in the hands of the people which the necessities of war had compelled it to put in circulation, as the only means of the national salvation.

"Every dollar of currency paid out, whether gold, silver, or paper, was given out for value received, and thus became, by the act of the Government, a valid claim for a dollar's worth of the whole property of the country. Hence not a dollar of it should ever have been withdrawn.

"It is now almost universally believed, that had the Treasury notes continued, as at first issued, to be received for all forms of taxes, duties and debts, they would have circulated to this day, as they did then, as so much gold, precisely as the Government paper did circulate in France, when put upon the same footing.

"This would have saved our country more than one half of the amount of the whole expenses of the war in the present shrinkage of values, and the interruption to honest industry. It would have saved us also from the perpetual drainage of gold to pay interest on our foreign indebtedness.

“The paper currency, commonly called *legal tenders* or greenbacks, was actually paid out for value received as so much gold, when gold could not be obtained. This being an incontrovertible fact, it follows that every Treasury note, demand note, or legal tender, given out as money, in payment for any form of labor and property, received by the Government, became, in the possession of its owners, real dollars, that could not be taken constitutionally from the people except by uniform taxes, as on other property.

“But whether our currency will be always on a par with gold or not, I have shown from history, and incontrovertible facts prove it, *that the commercial and industrial prosperity of a country do not depend upon the amount of gold and silver there is in circulation. Our prosperity must continually depend upon the industry, the enterprise, the busy internal trade and a true independence of foreign nations, which a paper circulation, well based on sound credit, has always been found to promote.*

“But I believe prosperity can never again bless our glorious country until justice is established, by giving back to the people the exact amount of currency found in circulation at the close of the war. That was the price of the nation’s life. It ought to be restored and made the permanent and unfluctuating measure of all values, through all coming time—never to be increased or diminished, only, as *per capita*, with the increase of the inhabitants of our country.”

IV.

It was a grand battle, nobly fought, and nobly lost, as had been clearly foreseen. Nobody expected Mr. Cooper would become President unless the election should be thrown into the House of Representatives by giving the

National Independents the balance of power. But this by no means dampened the ardor of Mr. Cooper, nor lessened his exertions. These were to end only with his life. He had full faith in the ultimate triumph of his principles when the masses of his countrymen should be sufficiently instructed in them by adversity and study.

His last appeal was made in vain to the Congress which went out of existence on the 4th of March preceding his death. His dying warning will be remembered:

“HONORED GENTLEMEN: Your petitioner, now in the ninety-second year of his age, respectfully prays, that the present Congress may not adjourn, until they have made the necessary and proper law, requiring, that all banking shall in future be carried on with United States Treasury Notes, receivable for all forms of taxes, duties and debts, both public and private—and that, after the expiration of the charter of our present banks, no paper money shall ever be allowed to circulate in this country in excess of the amount of the people’s money, actually found circulating as the currency at the close of the war. For every dollar of that currency the people had given value to the Government, and it should only be increased as *per capita* with the increase of the population after every census.

“Your petitioner further prays the Honorable Senators and Representatives to examine with care the following reasons, that prompted him to offer this petition:

“Impelled as I am by an irresistible desire to do all, that is possible to call and fix the undivided attention of the Government on the appalling scenes of wretchedness and ruin, that would inevitably follow the re-chartering of the 2300 banks, *deceitfully called national*—I cannot help addressing you on this occasion once more,

“ Such an army of banks, all united in one common effort to secure for themselves the largest amount of interest on their small specie capital, would find it for their advantage to expand and contract the currency to attain their object.

“ *Only a few weeks ago (March 30, 1882), Hon. Richard Warner, M. C., from Tennessee, proved in Congress, that the banks, deceitfully styled national, have made out of the people the enormous sum of \$1,848,930,000 within the last sixteen years, leaving the national debt, at the present time, nearly as large as it was at the close of our terrible war for the nation's life.*

“ For one, I have the most fearful forebodings of the consequences, that must grow out of a re-charter of these grasping institutions, *which are even litigating to be exempted from local taxes!!* The American people are beginning to realize, that a national debt is *not a blessing, as claimed by selfish monopolists, but a national curse*, which a wise and parental Government should dread as we would a pestilence.

“ I have lately learned, that a secret organization has grown up in our country, which is known as the Knights of Labor, and that they already number 150,000, and are daily increasing from the strikes, that extend over the States. They are under the guidance of able and talented leaders, who have the wisdom and courage to tell their working brothers what they must do to save themselves and families from the enslavement of a national debt, that enriches monopolists and non-producers. They caution them against strikes for higher wages, and advise them to continue work and use their money to buy for each organized company a Gatling gun with 150 rounds of ammunition, and three months' provisions for their families; then they may, like honest and prudent

men demand, obtain and maintain their 'inalienable right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness,' as mentioned in the Declaration of Independence.

"Such a body of industrious men, with such leaders, will not allow idle tramps as members of their order. If our bankers would act wisely and prudently, they would adopt the language of the late John Earl Williams, for many years the honored President of the Metropolitan Bank of New York:

" 'I would suggest, that Congress assume, at once, the inherent sovereign prerogative of a Government and exercise it, by furnishing all the inhabitants of the United States with a uniform national currency. Surely the people, and the people only, have a natural right to all the advantages, emolument, or income, that may inure from the issue of either \$1000 bonds with interest, or \$10 notes without, based on the faith and credit of the nation,' etc. . . .

"In 1813 Jefferson declared: 'Bank notes must be suppressed and the circulation restored to the nation, to whom it belongs,' etc. . . .

"Webster predicted that conditions, which permitted the rapid accumulation of property in the hands of a few, remitting the masses to poverty, would soon destroy free institutions, etc. . . .

"In spite of warnings, uttered and written by sages, statesmen and financiers from Franklin, Jefferson, and Webster to Senator Jones, President John Earl Williams and Treasurer Spinner; in spite of the seven and ten yearly periodic panics, that impoverished our farmers, manufacturers, mechanics, and laborers, and enriched the banks and capitalists, Secretary Folger and Comptroller Knox seem now inclined to advise the re-chartering of these banks, *deceitfully called national*. I wish

these two financiers could see as clearly as Treasurer Spinner, before it is too late.

“The charter of these banks, *deceitfully styled national*, was granted February 25, 1863, under the pretext of a war measure. In 1864 they circulated but \$31,235,270 of notes, furnished and guaranteed by the United States Treasury; in 1865 they circulated \$145,137,800, which, from that date to 1880, increased to \$343,834,167. On these millions the people’s Treasury has paid them interest in gold ever since, while laborers and producers had to take their wages in paper. Thus did the one hundred and twenty bankers, who were members of Congress, manage to legislate for their interests. Now their first charter being about to expire, they apply for a re-charter in a time of profound peace, when there can be no pretext for a war measure. Such a power in the hands of heartless corporations is not only dangerous to our liberties and persons, but to our daily comforts; because, when they see fit, they contract their circulation and refuse accommodation to manufacturers and employers, who are consequently obliged to stop work and discharge the men and women in their employ, thus causing panics, poverty, misery, and ruin. Soon such contraction will reach farms, houses and stocks, which these favored banks and their friends can buy for one half or one quarter of their cost; because the honest owners cannot pay the interest and taxes thereon, all of which makes the rich richer and the poor poorer, as happened from 1837 to 1841, from 1847 to 1850, from 1857 to 1863, and from 1873 to 1878—when the laboring and producing classes were impoverished by special legislation, that enabled bankers and monopolists to deceive the people and bribe such as stood in their way. . . .

“There was a somewhat plausible reason in 1863 to

charter banks, *deceitfully styled national*—this reason was called war measure, but now, 1882, our country and the world are at peace; there is not even a war cloud. Why then re-charter these banks against the letter and spirit of the Constitution, which contains no clause or word, that authorizes Congress to delegate the money power to anybody? Allow me to cite again Senator Jones' emphatic language:

“ ‘By interfering with the standards of the country, Congress has led the country away from the realms of prosperity, and thrust it beyond the bounds of safety. To refuse to replace it upon its former vantage-ground would be to incur a responsibility and a deserved reproach greater than that which men have ever before felt themselves able to bear. We cannot, we dare not, avoid speedy action on the subject. Not only does reason, justice, and authority unite in urging us to retrace our steps, but the organic law commands us to do so; and the presence of peril enjoins what the law commands.’

“ ‘May our Congress pass no more laws, giving away immense tracts of land to heartless corporations, thus creating land monopolies, like those that now curse the British Isles—and grant no charters to banks, that can contract and expand the people's medium of exchange at their pleasure; for such legislation favors the few at the expense of the many; causes discontent among the masses, and produces Nihilists, Guiteaus, and men who commit acts like the one just perpetrated in Dublin, May 7, 1882, which disgraces the civilization of the nineteenth century.

“ ‘As previously stated, I am now in the ninety-second year of my age, and have the satisfaction of knowing, that I have given to my country the best efforts of a

long, laborious life. In the course of my endeavors I have written and printed more than a million of documents, which I have sent to Congress, to the President and members of the Cabinet, and to all parts of our common country.

“The burden of my theme has been to show, that the Constitution has made it the imperative duty of Congress to take and hold the entire control of all, that should ever be allowed or used as the money of the nation. If the plan, set forth in a petition to Congress, to the President and his Cabinet on the 14th of December, 1862, in which I showed, that my ideas of finance were based on the opinions of such men as Franklin, Jefferson, Madison, Calhoun, Webster, etc., whose words and warnings I quoted—as I do in this document—had been adopted, the Government would have all the means it wanted in Treasury notes, and we should not have an enormous bonded debt in 1882.”

A MONUMENT TO PETER COOPER.

I.

The glory of the nation consists chiefly in the virtues and achievements of its founders, whether it be a monarchy, an empire, or a republic. It becomes the duty of all writers and teachers of the young, to inculcate the excellence of their examples, and to preserve a lively memory of their noble deeds. Where this duty is neglected, a great wrong is done to the dead, the living, and the future. For this purpose all histories should be written, and all monuments erected.

To secure this result all nations have held anniver-

saries, commemorating with joy the days of their birth, and executed great works of art in oil, marble, and bronze, erected temples and columns, and, above all, institutions of science and learning, and, to those worthy of it, gorgeous mausoleums adorn churches and burial-places.

No nation in the whole range of history has had so illustrious a roll, within the same period of time, of heroes, statesmen, and patriots.

These should all become as familiar to the mind of the young as household words; and during that tender period when impressions, the most powerful and permanent, are excited, the stories of the lives of those men who have done the most for their countries, should fill a large place in education. While all learning is valuable, that kind should be most earnestly inculcated which tends most directly to the increase of knowledge among men. This language is borrowed from that noble Englishman who founded the Smithsonian Institution at Washington. Its sole object was the diffusion of knowledge, and the glory which it has shed over his name is surpassed by that of no American, except the founder of the Cooper Union. The one educates and creates, the other scatters the records of what comprise the diffusion of new knowledge.

II.

A monument to Peter Cooper is a subject on which the people of New York are already speaking, and various views are held by different classes, while there is no difference of opinion on the point that some grand testimonial should be made, out of respect to his pure and lofty character as a citizen, and as one of the most illustrious promoters of education in the world.

At former periods there was a strange insensibility even to the duty of marking the scenes of the triumphs of our arms in winning our independence, and nearly all our battle-fields were left as unmarked as the bleak lands around them.

None but very well informed persons know where are the graves of all the presidents; still fewer, the resting-places of those men who in private life had rendered high services to the cause of science, art and learning. Several appropriations had been made by different Congresses and Legislatures, for the erection of monuments to those who had lived or died in the cause of national liberty or advancement; but with rare exceptions those projected monuments were never erected; nor were the National or State Governments ever called on for the money. In a still greater number of instances, associations of citizens had been formed, on exciting occasions, to establish memorials of admiration and gratitude for public benefactors. But most of these schemes were never carried out, or the memorials were unworthy of those whose virtues it was proposed to commemorate.

This insensibility to the claims of the departed, for a long time pervaded the entire community. Sadder sights could hardly be witnessed in any country, than what were commonly called "grave-yards." They were, for the most part, overgrown with briars, and the head-stones had fallen, or were reeling to the ground like drunken tramps. Such a thing as a beautiful cemetery, well cared for, hardly existed within the territory of the United States. But this barbarism was to cease as the generation immediately preceding the present should have recovered from the pressure of poverty and hard work, and art and refinement should assert their

claims on a free and great people. Rural cemeteries began to be established; intermural burials were prohibited, or the fashion died out. Great advances were made in public and private architecture; the graves of the departed were sought out; weeds and briars gave way to the living green of grass, and the charm of flowers; Old Mortality went through the resting-places of the dead restoring inscriptions, and those neglected hamlets of the dead were converted into gardens. An age of monuments had come! To the eye of cultivated taste these were among the most striking signs of the advance of our taste and civilization.

III.

It was a restoration from barbarism. Before the generation that just preceded us had passed away, the example of Boston in Mt. Auburn, of Greenwood, Cypress Hills, and Woodlawn, near New York, was followed by every city in the land, and by every considerable town. These cemeteries are now numbered by the thousand. All idea of a *grave-yard* has not only gone out of fashion, but nearly out of memory.

Cemeteries—modern cemeteries—are now become places of resort like parks and pleasure grounds, instead of being haunted with ghosts to frighten children, and even make grown people, after dark, give them a wide berth.

Like everything else in this young and impetuous country, the passion for monuments, especially for public men, was likely to be overdone—not, indeed, in beauty of art, nor expense lavished—and there is already a perceptible lack of discernment and appropriateness in many of these emblems.

The old motto of never speaking ill of the dead, is

the dictate of justice and charity. But if the same eulogies are to be pronounced, and the same expense and splendor to be invoked, over the mean and selfish rich man, as for the noble philanthropist, who lived for his fellow-men, the whole thing degenerates into a farce.

IV.

In the building of any monument to the departed, the deeds of the man should be taken into consideration. To honor and praise a bad man, is a satire on the lives of the good, whether they be living or dead; it is an insult to justice and mercy.

No monument should be erected that is not appropriate, any more than lying history should be written, for all monuments are history, and, if they be false, the longer they stand, the more will history be perverted.

It is to be hoped that no such blunder or wrong will be perpetrated by the great community where Peter Cooper was universally known, respected, and beloved, and where there is a universal desire to mark the respect that is felt for his virtues, and where the warmest desire is felt to make some grand and lasting memorial to his memory. The only question now in men's minds, is what this memorial should be. A jury of men of taste and discrimination could hardly conceive any fitness, or even propriety, in erecting a monument to Peter Cooper inside of the Institute or near it.

Any such idea was abhorrent to him during his lifetime; he shrank from it with more than reluctance, and if his spirit, as we believe, would be as fully conscious of an attempt to honor him, as he was before his departure, it would give him pain, for he would see the hollowness of the sham. It would, to all men of right

feeling, be an object of disgust, even if he had built that Institute with no nobler sentiment than to perpetuate his memory, as many rich men do from such motives. He showed great discernment, and chose the surest way to fame. But that great mausoleum which will perpetuate his memory, will be forever exempt from such a thought. The whole tenor of his life for more than ninety-two years rendered such an imputation impossible. If the great army of those he has blessed—now scattered all over the world—with a diploma of excellence from that institution, of which they are, and their children will be, prouder than of any parchment scroll ever sent out of an university—if these men and these women wish to give expression to their gratitude by some artistic offering, it is suggested that a bronze statue or bust, be executed by one of their number (for among them are some of the best artists in the country), and let it be placed in the centre of the broad passageway of the building, so that all who ever pass shall see a most truthful representation of the form and features of their great benefactor.

He had long ago selected one of the most sightly and beautiful mounds in Greenwood, where the ashes of his noble wife repose, with no mark over her sepulchre. He knew that his children, or his grandchildren, or even a later posterity, would be only too glad to do such a work. If New York wishes to ask the privilege, and it should be granted (which is more than doubtful), of erecting some magnificent monument there, let a lofty monument or classic temple be raised.

V.

But a better plan, by far, and a more eloquent expression of their admiration for Peter Cooper's character,

would be a general and great subscription to the endowment fund of the Institute. This would be in harmony with the builder's character, and the highest act this metropolis is capable of performing. And it would be the first contribution made by this city, or any other body of men, to this noble cause.

In human history a parallel cannot be found, in which so small an amount of money for the cause of education, has produced such immense results.

It can hardly be comprehended how the partial or complete education in the useful arts of forty thousand young people had been accomplished. The rich man's son is not supposed to be prepared for and taken commendably through a collegiate and professional education for anything less than five thousand dollars; and, in most instances, he goes out no better fitted to get his living and be a useful citizen than he would have been if he had stayed away.

At this rate of five thousand dollars a head, for forty thousand young men and women going out from the Institute now earning their living—and most of them at their own price for their work—let the reader go to his multiplication table; the sum is bewildering. But these figures cannot lie.

They are enough to put to the blush every college and university in the United States. It is to-day a practical miracle, and it will remain so until Peter Cooper's character is far better understood; and the scale of calculating the cost of that kind of education cannot be comprehended.

VI.

All the Institute requires now to increase its usefulness is more money. There is no necessity for establishing

another school, or series of schools, like this; and, in any event, it would take a long time to set it going, while there would be no hope that anything superior to it would be devised, or with anything like the economy that has been displayed here.

It is the best system of free technical schools in the world. The instruction here given to the poorer youth of both sexes of this city has been an inestimable benefit, not alone to those who have received it, but to the city of which they are inhabitants. One of our chief journals has well said: "To enable a poor young man, or a young woman, to obtain such thorough instruction in the practical arts as is offered free of charge by Cooper Institute, is to enable a constantly increasing number to enter these avocations, which are not only better paid than the work of mere laborers, but which also raise those who perform them, in the scale of intelligence, and make them therefore the more valuable citizens. What would please the founder most, would be the enlargement and secured continuance of the Institute schools."

VII.

These views were also still more strikingly enforced by an appeal to the leading capitalists of the metropolis in the *New York Herald*, when speaking of "the debt of New York manufacturers to the Cooper Union." I cannot refrain from quoting it:

"Few statistics of the census of 1880 were regarded by the country with greater interest than those which revealed last year that the city of New York is the first city of the Union in manufactures as well as commerce. Philadelphia had been so accustomed to boast of that distinction for herself that her inhabitants were bewildered by the contrast between their claim and the

facts, and have scarcely yet recovered from their amazement. Here are the figures of the census year for comparison:

	<i>New York.</i>	<i>Philadelphia.</i>
Number of factories.....	11,339	8,567
Capital.....	\$181,206,356	\$187,148,857
Workpeople employed.....	227,352	185,527
Wages paid.....	\$97,030,021	\$64,265,966
Materials consumed.....	\$288,441,691	\$199,155,477
Products.....	\$472,926,437	\$324,342,935

“If the manufactures of Brooklyn, Jersey City and Newark are grouped with those of New York, as they fairly should be, the comparison, of course, becomes more striking:

	<i>Brooklyn.</i>	<i>Jersey City.</i>	<i>Newark.</i>
Number of factories.....	5,201	584	1,319
Capital.....	\$61,646,749	\$11,899,915	\$25,679,885
Wages paid.....	\$22,487,457	\$4,622,655	\$13,171,339
Workpeople employed..	47,587	11,138	30,046
Materials consumed.....	\$129,085,091	\$49,738,985	\$44,604,335
Products.....	\$177,223,142	\$60,473,905	\$69,252,705

“No census figures are available to show precisely how much of the labor put into the manufactures of New York and its three neighbors should be termed ‘skilled labor;’ but nobody can reasonably doubt that of the three hundred and sixteen thousand factory hands, a much greater proportion is entitled to be so classified than would be the case anywhere else in the United States. It needs only the slightest consideration of the extraordinary variety and subdivision of their occupations to prove that this is so. A comparison again with Philadelphia between the amount of capital and the value of products indicates it. The Philadelphia factories, with a larger capital invested in buildings and machinery, produce fabrics of only two thirds of the value of those of New York. The superior value of the New York products depends, doubtless, in a large degree upon that of materials manipulated; but the figures

we have cited warrant a belief that it is attributable in a larger degree to the artistic skill of the operatives.

“This brings us to the point to which we wish to direct attention—the debt New York manufacturers owe to the technical and art schools of the Cooper Union, which educate labor to the high standard of skill that is needful, and the obligation that rests on them to endow, enlarge and foster those schools out of self-interest for the future as well as gratitude for the past. Whatever the explanation may be, it is a fact which does discredit to them that they never have supplemented the generous gifts of Peter Cooper which have inured to their advantage. We do not know of a cent that any of them ever has contributed in this direction. We have heard of the gift of a moderate sum by a Massachusetts manufacturer annually for the last seven years for special instruction in industrial design in the drawing classes of the Woman’s Art School of the Union; and that is the solitary instance, we believe, of any such benefaction, and its results ought to make New York manufacturers blush still more deeply. Pupils who have enjoyed this special course provided by the intelligent liberality of a citizen of another State—although they are women, and although their instruction was general and not technical—have been eagerly invited into employment by New York makers of glass, carpets, wall-papers and other fine fabrics, and are to-day intrusted with very responsible charges in their factories.

“New York and Philadelphia both have outgrown the era in their development as manufacturing cities during which they safely could rely upon deriving a suitable and sufficient supply of artistic laborers from other communities. The textile manufacturers of Philadelphia, with an intelligent perception of their needs,

opened more than a year ago a subscription, which soon mounted to a large sum, to found a school there for special instruction in the textile arts. Almost at the same time General McClellan, then Governor of New Jersey, urged the Legislature of that State to make a liberal appropriation to encourage special instruction for ceramic manufactures. In these and other instances that may be cited a clearer perception of self-interest is shown than New York, with one noble exception, has displayed.

“Peter Cooper was not merely charitable—he was far-sighted and public-spirited in the highest degree in his foundation of the Cooper Union. His benefaction was not merely for the scholars in the Union schools, it was also for the particular advantage of the manufacturers of New York and for the general welfare of his native city. He was a quarter of a century ahead of any of his fellow-citizens in his foresight. He anticipated one of the most serious of their present necessities. It remains for them to take up his noble work and carry it on for their own advantage. The New York manufacturers owe to the Cooper Union an immediate endowment of its schools with at least the sum he contributed to them, which, at the most moderate estimate, exceeds two million dollars. It is a fair test of their intelligence whether they will hasten to make such an endowment. There never will be a more propitious opportunity for them than this to combine self-interest with a grateful recognition of their obligation to the good man whose praise to-day is on every tongue. Nor should contributions come from manufacturers alone. The whole city is interested. Whatever harms or helps any branch of its business—industrial or mercantile—harms or helps all branches. Whenever and wherever

efforts are visible to develop better talent, skill and taste in manufactures than New York has, or to draw away from New York the best that it possesses, the whole community is concerned. New York needs to be as jealous of competition with its industries as it is of incursions on its commerce."

It is impossible to believe that New York will not respond with her proverbial munificence to so grand and splendid an object.

TRIBUTES TO THE MEMORY OF PETER COOPER.

I.

They were universal and sincere. His native city could not help clothing itself with the emblems of mourning, but they indicated a feeling far different from that which usually lowers the flags and standards of nations at half mast, and displays the signs of private sorrow. There was no gloom, no sadness, none of the pain of bereavement which the early doom of the brave, the loved and the beautiful inspire; it was a higher and sublimer sentiment. The eyes of all the generous and the good filled with tears of gratitude that the great friend of humanity had lived—not that he rested from his labors when his noble work was done. We knew that no tomb could hold *him*—only his *ashes*. He was with us still, and would be with all the future. For such a man there is no death—only immortality.

II.

A million of people wanted to have his body laid "in state" in the City Hall, for every one wished to cast a

final glance at the calm familiar face of the beloved man. But those who alone could decide, knew the wishes of the departed, and his obsequies were from the beginning to the end distinguished by the utmost simplicity and lack of ostentation which corresponded with his life and character. Hence no pomp made the funeral one to be remembered as a magnificently sombre pageant; but the burial of Peter Cooper will long live in the tender memories of the greatest community on the Western Hemisphere. No muffled beat of drum, no melancholy dirge or dead march played, nor did detachments of military march with inverted arms and draped flags in honor of the dead. There were no gorgeous trappings of woe. But the hearts of a sorrowing people beat tenderly, while their pent-up feelings found relief in silent tears, and flags drooped from the homes of rich and poor, from public and private buildings, as the dust of New York's good man was borne to its last resting place. Even the elements seemed to weep because the great lover of his fellow-men was to be hidden from those who loved him. Like the hearts of all who knew him, and there were few who did not, the sky was overcast all day, and the rain fell like tears in the morning.

Grief was universal. Grave faces were everywhere. All mourned the loss of as true a friend as humanity has ever had. In his case there were none too poor to do him reverence. His death was a shock. People could hardly realize it, and even while his remains were in their midst, they did not feel regret so keenly; but when they saw the mortal framework being silently borne from the scenes of his busy and kindly life forever, then there was sadness indeed.

III.

The casket was taken in a plain hearse to the All Souls Unitarian Church, in which he had long been a devout worshipper, and laid on a catafalque in front of the pulpit, where was placed a bouquet of white lilies, white roses and rosebuds. On either side of the platform on which the pulpit stands, were tall palms and banks of flowers, while the baptismal font was also filled with flowers. On the carpet of the raised space around the reading-desk, were tributes of flowers, one of violets and white roses, with the inscription in violets, "Our benefactor is at rest." The coffin was so placed that the head rested toward the north transept.

The upper part of the coffin-lid was removed, disclosing the form of the venerable philanthropist, one hand resting on the breast, and the well-known features wearing a natural, life-like expression, suggestive rather of peaceful slumber than of death. On the breast lay a single spray of lily of the valley, and on the coffin were spread white and red roses, azaleas, calla lilies and Easter lilies. The plate bore the name "Peter Cooper," in plain Roman letters, and above it were the words, "Born February 12, 1791," in plain script, while beneath was the date of death.

Some near relatives of the family had brought with them, early, baskets of flowers, and they at once began to deck the lid of the coffin with them, arranging in a harmonious mass the tea roses, including deep jacqueminots and Catherine de Medicis. Besides there were hyacinths, pansies, lilies of the valley, delicate adjantum ferns and smilax. They placed the beautiful tokens of love tenderly upon the coffin, their eyes the while almost blinded with tears. Touching as this sight was, there was

another spectacle that was even more so. The eldest son of Mr. Hewitt noticed that the hair and whiskers had been slightly disarranged by a gentle breeze. Silently he took a small comb from his pocket, and lovingly smoothed back the truant hairs.

Soon after 9 o'clock there arrived at the church a committee of eighteen of the alumni of the Cooper Union. They were dressed in black, with crape upon their left arms, and had marched in double file from the Cooper Union to the church. Proceeding to the front of the church they divided, nine going to the north, and nine to the south, where they seated themselves in the pews on either side of the pulpit. Four of their number then took their places as a guard of honor, and each half hour were relieved by four others.

IV.

“When the doors were opened, in streamed, slowly and almost noiselessly, the multitude all through the day. All classes and conditions were represented. There were rich and poor, black and white, Christian, Hebrew and infidel, young and old. Men, tottering on the verge of the grave, walked behind mothers carrying their infants, and to whose skirts clung other children. Silently the seemingly endless line of humanity passed up the south aisle, viewed the remains and passed down the north aisle. It was an affecting sight. Many out of the thousands who made the sad visit, had received of Peter Cooper's bounty. As these passed and saw his lifeless body, peacefully resting in the coffin, and realized that his heart was still in death and could no more throb responsive to the appeal for help, the tears welled up and could not be repressed. Others, who only knew the philanthropist as the world knew him, had occasion

to use their handkerchiefs as they passed out of the church. Every person felt that a rare friend was about to be taken from them. They were right."

It was at 10.30 when the alumni and students of the Cooper Institute, who had marched from that building in procession, entered and passed before the casket, led by the scholars of the Ladies' Art School, with Miss Susan M. Carter at their head. Each of the young ladies carried a single flower, which she reverently laid on the lid of the casket. The effect of this simple but touching tribute was greatly heightened by the low strains of the organ. The ladies were followed by the Alumni Association, under President James R. Smith; the faculty of the Institute, with Dr. Zachos, the curate, at their head; the students of the chemical, literary and scientific departments; the members of the cast and form architectural and drawing classes, and the members of the Inventors' Institute. The entire delegation aggregated 3500.

V.

When, at a later hour in the afternoon, the church was filled with an assembly embracing delegations from all the great municipal bodies and associations, the simple but sublime honors with which Christianity dismisses the souls of its believers to the endless life, the Rev. Robert Collyer paid the following affectionate tribute to his revered and beloved friend:

"We gather about the dust of our dear friend to-day, and thank God for his life, I trust, more than we mourn his death, who are not bound to him by the tender ties of kinship and the home, to find a joy in our sorrow like the joy in harvest, and to say for him what he never felt free to say for himself after all these years of noble striving. He has fought a good fight; he has finished

his course; he has kept the faith, and has proven himself a workman who needeth not to be ashamed now that the long day's work is done; for by pureness, by knowledge, by kindness, by love unfeigned, by word of truth, by the power of God, and by the armor of righteousness, on the right hand and on the left, he has won such reverence as is seldom won by any man in his own lifetime.

“The man whose home was a more sacred shrine than any church we can name in our city; whose presence in these later years where men are most eager to be about their business, brought a courtesy and deference of air akin to that they used to show in the old time to princes, and whose name was held dear, even in the hamlets of misery and sin, and was spoken, as I know, by the poorest and most forlorn, with a tenderness which is seldom won by the priests of God; who had learned to feel no fear as he went about our streets, because the very roughs had become his guardians, and would have fallen into ranks about him in any danger, and held their lives in pawn for his safety; whose white head was indeed a crown of glory, because it was found in the way of righteousness, and whose presence wherever he went lay like a bar of sunshine across a dark and troubled day, so that I have seen it light up some thousands of care-worn faces and send waves of sweet laughter rippling from heart to heart in a moment of time, as if they were saying, who looked on him, ‘It cannot be so hard a world as we thought it was, since Peter Cooper stays in it to give it his benediction.’ The man whose simplest speech in the Institute, touched with the hesitancy of more than fourscore and ten years, went to the heart more potently than the choicest eloquence of other men, and could never have been

matched to his lovers and friends by any speech of a monarch from his throne, and who—all blessings rest on him for that also—entered as sweetly into the enjoyment of it, and the joy, as we did who heard him; and yet never through the spirit which tarnishes such speech now and then in our great benefactors, and creates the suspicion that they may still be proud of their humility when they have shorn themselves of all other pride; but through the beautiful innocence and simplicity which, ever since I knew him, was native to his heart, and clasping the latest years with the earliest, compelled us all to say, ‘Of such is the kingdom of heaven.’

“He brought back to my memory when I would see him that good apostle Eliot who, when he was a very old man, and a friend asked him how he fared, said: ‘My understanding is not what it was some years ago, and my memory fails me a little and my speech, but I thank God my charity holds out well and grows.’ So he might have said.

“I love to think, as we prepare to bear his dust to the burial, of his absolute life-long integrity. Here was a man whose word was so divine to him; that his bond became a memorandum.

“I love to remember again the wisdom which lay within his noble gift to our city and our land.

“‘The great object that I desire to accomplish by the erection of this institution,’ he says, in the scroll hidden away in the corner-stone, ‘is to open the avenues of scientific knowledge to the youth of our city and country, and so unfold the balance of nature, that the young may see the beauties of creation, enjoy its blessings, and learn to love the Author from whom cometh every good and perfect gift.’ He wanted no such monument as we would have built for him gladly. He was wise in

that, because he was so modest and simple, he has such a monument as no art could contrive built by his own hands; but those words should be graven on it in letters of gold for all men to read until this island falls back to a heap of ruins.

“Dear friends who must sorrow as we cannot sorrow for this parting, who cannot remember when he was not with you, who will dwell in your home in the sweet way no more, while the long use and unit of his life will still hold the ear to listen for his voice, and the hand ready for all tender offices, we cannot ask you not to mourn, for then we should be less than human, while he was so human we all loved; but while we sorrow with you we can bid you be comforted, and wait for the day, near at hand, when your sorrow will give place to a tender joy. The life he lived so full on earth is consummated in heaven now, and crowned. This is not a memory you will cherish, but a living presence while you live and forever more. That divine word comes true again, the Master said, ‘He that liveth and believeth in me shall never die, for life is ever lord of death, and love can never lose its own.’”

VI.

A vast procession moved down Broadway, bearing the precious dust forever from the great city whose million hearts uttered their tenderest benedictions on the memory of its best citizen.

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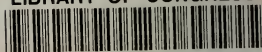
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